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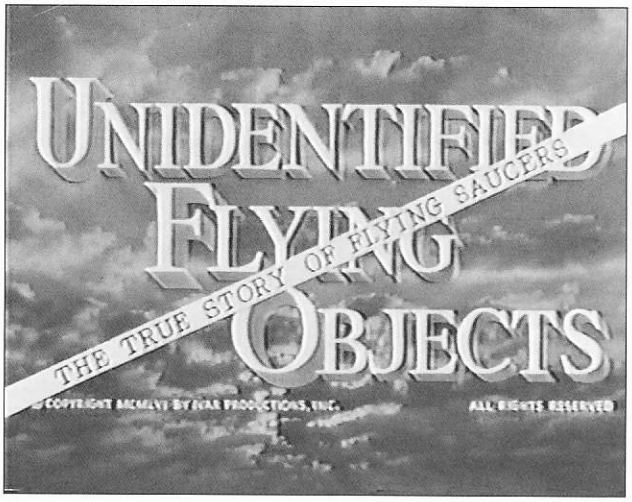
Los Angeles reporter Tom Towers as USAF press officer Al Chop.



Headlines reporting the 1948 Mantell crash.

American Airlines pilot Willis T. Sperry talks about his 1950 sighting.

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UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS
PRESENTED BY CLARENCE GREENE and RUSSELL ROUSE

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS: THE MOVIE (1956)

INTERNATIONAL UFO REPORTER

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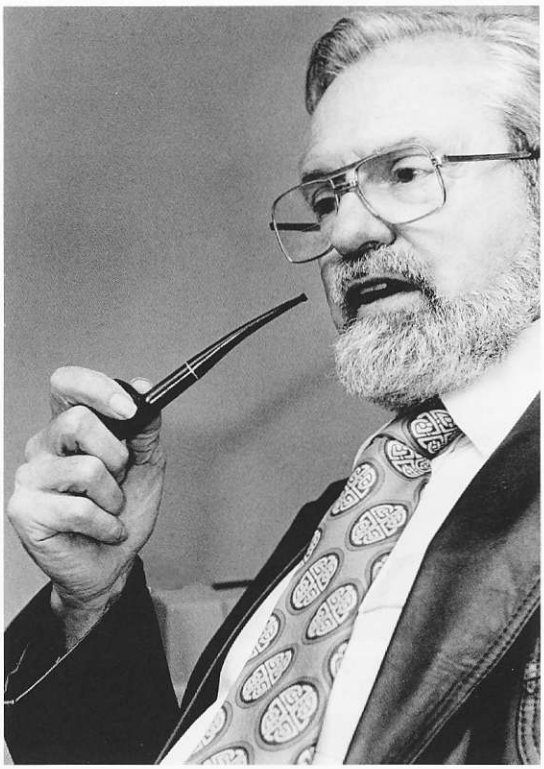

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UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS, ACCIDENTAL EPIC

BY ROBERT BARROW

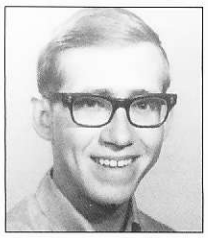
The science-fiction film *This Island Earth,* released in 1955, was one of the 1950s SF and horror movies inspired in large part by the fear of nuclear war. Such films from the period ranged from the worthwhile to the goofy. *This Island Earth* holds up well enough over the years, though its troublesome on-board spaceship mutant now seems more annoying than scary—something that could have been easily disposed of with a dime-store flyswatter.

According to promotional material from Universal International Pictures, this expensive movie took 2½ years to complete. One can speculate, therefore, that its production was just getting off the ground in 1952, a banner year for the sheer number of UFO sighting reports.

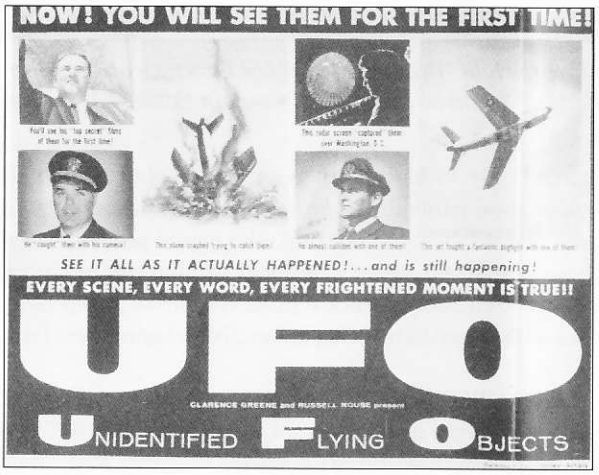
Somewhere around late 1953 or early 1954, as *This Island Earth* was in the final stages of production, while other studios not nearly so influential as Universal International were still turning out monster movies in dizzying succession, plans for another kind of motion picture were in the works—an upstart whose very concept seemed bizarre. This was to be a motion picture about flying saucers, but not the saucers of *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers* (1956, with apologies to Maj. Donald Keyhoe's book *Flying Saucers from Outer Space*, upon which this SF thriller was *very* loosely based) or *Invasion of the Saucer Men* (1957).

The idea contrived by motion picture producer Clarence Greene, who was deeply intrigued by the UFO phenomenon in the wake of his own sighting, involved making not a fiction film about UFOs, but a documentary based upon the U.S. government's investigation of some important UFO incidents of the era. As Greene began assembling his production crew, his writer, director, and the rest, he also brought together a remarkable group of individuals who knew about the government's UFO investigations. Greene intended to tell the story as accurately as he could get it.

Among them was Al Chop, whose job on the Pentagon's



Robert Barrow (left, in the Air Force in 1970) began researching UFOs as a teenager in 1963. His articles and book reviews appeared in The A.P.R.O. Bulletin, Pursuit, Argosy UFO, True Flying Saucers & UFOs, Official UFO, *and newspapers and magazines.*


NOW! YOU WILL SEE THEM FOR THE FIRST TIME!
SEE IT ALL AS IT ACTUALLY HAPPENED!...and is still happening!
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UFO
CLARENCE GREENE and RUSSELL ROUSE present
UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

press desk in the early 1950s converted him from UFO skeptic to proponent based upon the numerous credible reports he encountered. The documentary, in fact, would focus mostly on Chop's official involvement with the UFO project. The "actor" chosen to play Chop in the movie, suggested by Chop himself, was Tom Towers, a writer for the old *Los Angeles Examiner*. Towers, who occasionally wrote about UFOs in his aviation columns, knew Chop through mutual business connections. Greene also was acquainted with Towers and thought him an excellent choice.

Greene's movie would be notable for its lack of name actors, though a few would be recognizable today to the committed film buff (Les Tremayne, Harry Morgan, and Olan Soule). The bigger casting story, however, concerned the prominent names who worked *behind* the scenes. In addition to Chop, these included no less than former Air Force Capt. Edward J. Ruppelt, the most famous chief of Project Blue Book; USAF Major Dewey J. Fournet, former UFO project monitor; and radar expert Wendell Swanson, noteworthy for the construction of an elaborate U.S. radar installation in Okinawa. Swanson, in fact, did have an on-screen role in the movie, and while he

The real Al Chop

Tom Towers as Al Chop

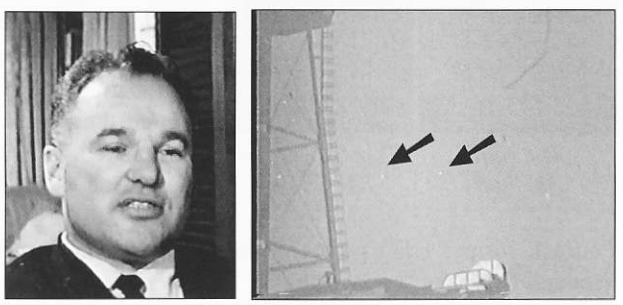
Left to right: Producer Clarence Greene, radar expert Wendell Swanson, and USAF Captain Edward J. Ruppelt.

claimed only to harbor an "open mind" about UFOs, the viewer soon gains the impression that Swanson knew far more about UFOs on radar than he would publicly admit. These men would guide Greene and staff through every page of script to ensure authentic representations of the investigations with which they were personally and intimately familiar.[1]

The UFO incidents destined to be portrayed in the production were impressive for their time. The 1947 Kenneth Arnold case would be the starter, followed by the tragic death of Kentucky Air National Guard pilot Capt. Thomas Mantell in 1948 while chasing a supposed UFO.[2] Another 1948 case, involving Lieut. George Gorman's supposed dogfight over Fargo, North Dakota, with a possible UFO, was woven into the storyline.[3] A January 1951 incident in which a DC-3 taking off from the Sioux City, Iowa, airport swerved to avoid a collision with a mysterious light was also featured, perhaps because a military intelligence colonel observed the phenomenon with other passengers before the thing zoomed up and disappeared. A jewel of the production would be an external airport interview with American Airlines pilot Capt. Willis T. Sperry, whose personal account of his dramatic encounter with a UFO during a flight in 1950 would leave the audience spellbound.

But the best was yet to come. With the assistance of his advisors, Greene procured the still-unexplained and famous Montana UFO film of two objects photographed by businessman Nicholas Mariana, as well as the Utah movie of multiple objects taken by Navy chief photographer Delbert Newhouse. Though Greene decided to film his documentary in black and white, the two UFO movies were included in their original color, strangely reminiscent of the dramatic and emotional switch to color from black and white in *The Wizard of Oz*. Eventually it would come to light that both UFO films, analyzed by the military, were apparently missing the best frames when returned to their owners, and therefore Greene's motion picture documentary would also lack the best frames. This information was not imparted in the production.

Appropriately, the climax of this Clarence Greene–Russell Rouse (his partner) production would be a dramatization of the July 1952 UFO encounters over Washington, D.C.

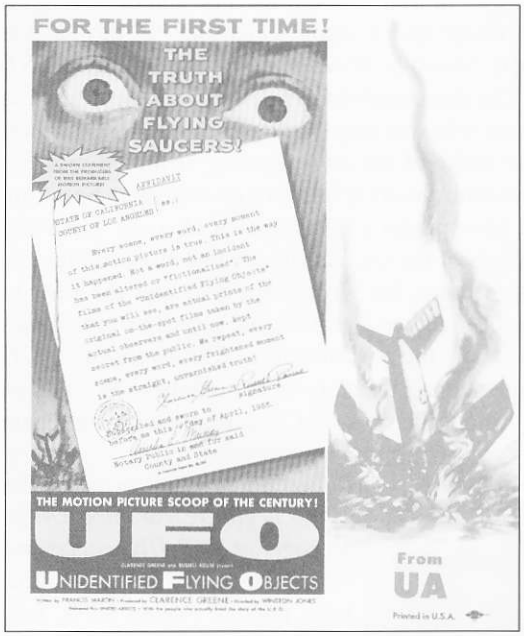


Nicholas Mariana and one frame of the film he took of two UFOs at Great Falls, Montana, August 15, 1950.

The Impact

And so it was, in May 1956, that the Greene-Rouse feature-length UFO documentary distributed by United Artists was liberally splashed upon the nation's, and then the world's, theater screens. Action-packed posters blazing in red and yellow boldly announced its title as *Unidentified Flying Objects*, or simply as *U.F.O.*

Reviewer response proved generally quite favorable, but the audience—always the most faithful critics, fair or not, because they shell out the money for admission—found *U.F.O.* less than compelling, and the film initially lost a considerable sum at the box office. UFO researcher Max B. Miller summed up the situation expertly, having attended the movie's premiere at the Fox Wilshire Theater in Los Angeles: "When I saw this film the second time at that showing the objective was not to see the picture again, but rather to check attendance and audience reaction. This was



Sworn statement of authenticity from the movie's producers.

Actors playing Dewey Fournet (left) and Ed Ruppelt.

probably for the best, too. For while I was thoroughly enthusiastic after viewing *U.F.O.* the first time, I found the second time quite a let-down. . . .The movie isn't, on the whole, particularly interesting. The pace is slow, the action stiff."[4]

Ufologist Ted Bloecher saw things a little differently, though it must be stressed that Miller's review was positive about the movie. "A somewhat slim storyline," judged Bloecher. However: "The producers have wisely refrained from trying to duplicate the visual appearance of UFOs in any of the cases they refer to. . . . By avoiding facsimiles of the objects in question, they have made two heretofore secret Mariana and Newhouse films showing actual UFOs in flight considerably more forceful and conspicuous."[5]

Bloecher was more sympathetic than some reviewers to the action's being "low-keyed throughout" and the fact that non-actors were used so extensively (most were Los Angeles law-enforcement officers). He also took note of the extensive "padding" scenes and instances of forms being filled out, sometimes laboriously, and of the frequent newspaper visuals with the word "saucers."

Significant members of the cast felt that *U.F.O.* needed more drama and less narration. Towers readily admitted "a little of the Hollywood touch" would have helped. Obviously, though, Greene had found himself driven from the start to focus upon the documentary aspect, rather than the high dramatic effects exhibited in his earlier movies, such as *New York Confidential, The Thief,* and *The Well.* Ultimately, the issue here may have been that Greene was as new to what he attempted with *U.F.O.* as the audience was when it searched for familiar film ploys that simply weren't in evidence. Possibly, many in the audience may not have entertained even a clue about the definition of "documentary" when they purchased admission tickets.

U.F.O. went all out to sacrifice drama for accuracy—to which this writer can attest, because in the 1970s when Towers loaned me his copy of the script (proudly stored for years behind his living room sofa, he confessed), I found it sprinkled with handwritten annotations and minor changes, apparently created just prior to various screen shots in the interest of a factual portrayal. But there was one little (actually a blatant) alteration I at first missed in Greene's creation: At the point in the movie when the April 7, 1952, issue of *Life* magazine hits the newsstands, suggesting that UFOs may harbor extraterrestrial visitors, the cover photo

LIFE
THERE IS A CASE FOR INTERPLANETARY SAUCERS
MARILYN MONROE
THE TALK OF HOLLYWOOD
APRIL 7, 1952
THERE IS A CASE FOR INTERPLANETARY SAUCERS

Marilyn Monroe appeared on the real Life *magazine cover of April 7, 1952, while President Truman was substituted for the movie (right).*

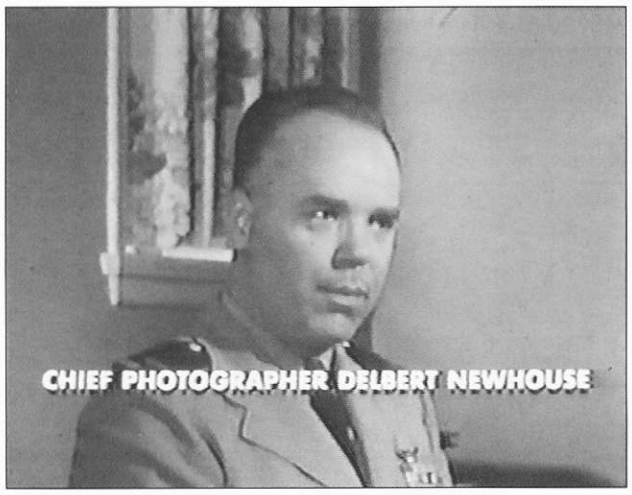
showing President Truman is a false one; the real issue's cover shows actress Marilyn Monroe. We can assume either that Truman's photo was implemented to express the sobriety of the UFO issue in the fifties (Truman was president during the Washington, D.C., sightings that proved so important to the movie) or that for professional reasons United Artists didn't want attention paid to Monroe, who may have been under contract with a competing studio.

My first encounter with *U.F.O.* occurred in the early 1960s when it aired on local afternoon TV, and subsequently on a couple of late-late programs. I had seen many a science-fiction thriller as a kid, but had never heard of Greene's film. One suspects it didn't take long after theatrical release before its relegation to late-late TV movie shows around the country. When home videotapes of movies first became available commercially, evidently *U.F.O.* saw a brief videotape release via a company unknown, since there were video search companies actively seeking and selling it. The video then went into hibernation until 2000, when MGM Home Video released its version, only to pull it from the market two or three years ago. While some UFO researchers have anticipated a DVD release, that hasn't happened yet commercially. The movie has popped up on cable TV over the years and

Tom Towers as Al Chop awakens to disturbing news about saucers over Washington in July 1952.

The 1956 film documents the saucermania of the era.

Gen. John A. Samford tells the press on July 29, 1952, that the Washington sightings and radar targets were caused by temperature inversions.



Warrant Officer Delbert C. Newhouse describes how he took a color film of a UFO near Tremonton, Utah, on July 2, 1952.

probably continues to do so sporadically.[6]

U.F.O. has quietly endured over the decades. Perhaps not all of the UFO reports depicted remain unidentified, but there are enough that do—the Montana and Utah films, the Washington National Airport encounters, for example. Yet Greene, certainly no newcomer to movie-making by the time he tackled UFOs, stubbornly stayed the course and chose narration over spine-tingling special effects, leaving the unseen up to the audience to conjure. Remarkable still was his use of only about 92 minutes of film to educate his audience proficiently about the early status of the official UFO investigation—the most open, honest, and brief window of government UFO information disclosure America ever experienced. The very moment when the government seemed poised to tell us about the saucers was a special one indeed.

Thirty years have elapsed since I first wrote about *U.F.O.* Many of the fine people involved with production, most of whom would be in their late 80s and 90s by now, have passed on, including Capt. Sperry, Towers, and Greene himself. Greene's only response to my written questions in the 1970s consisted of less than a page of agonizingly curt answers. Many years went by before I realized how bitter he must have been about the lack of audience response to *U.F.O.*

My hope, as 2006 takes off for parts unknown, is that this 50-year-old documentary gains lasting respect both as an essential piece of UFO research history and as a unique chunk of American history. The Library of Congress, the American Film Institute, *somebody*, needs to give *U.F.O.* tender loving care, make sure it's preserved and protected forever, and reissued as a DVD so that generations to come can experience the serious side of UFO history—with two great color films of UFOs as a bonus.

Notes

1. I erred seriously when I wrote a version of this article 30 years ago, insisting that Capt. Ruppelt played his own role, which he clearly did not. My access to Ruppelt photos at the time was limited, but thanks to researcher Wendy Connors and her 2000 book (with Michael Hall) *Captain Edward J. Ruppelt: Summer of the Saucers 1952*, I now realize all of Ruppelt's work was behind the scenes.

2. Researchers, especially Kevin D. Randle, conducted lengthy and seemingly conclusive investigations that indicate Mantell died while chasing a secret military balloon known as the Skyhook.

3. Again, a balloon may be the culprit and not a UFO. See Jerome Clark, *Strange Skies: Pilot Encounters with UFOs* (New York: Citadel, 2003), pp. 66–68.

4. Quoting from "World's First Documentary," *Flying Saucers*, June 1957.

5. Ibid.

6. Thanks to Barry Greenwood, who long ago provided me with additional information about the movie, and also to Gary Mangiacopra, whose research into *U.F.O.* continues. ✦

WE KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE

BY MICHAEL D. SWORDS

Once upon a time it was simple. Col. George Garrett could sit at his desk in the Pentagon and envision the disks racing across Kenneth Arnold's line of sight and say: "Advanced aerial technology."

Alfred Loedding could imagine a spaceliner passing Chiles and Whitted's plane and superimpose Ludwig Prandtl's mathematics upon the case and say: "Advanced aerial technology."

Charles Moore and his theodolite, J. J. Kaliszewski in his balloon project chase plane, and Nash and Fortenberry in their TWA airliner could all say "Advanced aerial technology" about their sightings. Nuts and bolts. Metallic, strangely designed, aerodynamic vehicles. Extraterrestrial. Simple as that.

But things wouldn't stay so simple or well behaved. Noninertial motions and hovering that defied gravity soon appeared in sightings. Well, said the "can-do" minds of the engineers, all right, we'll be able to do it someday. What about reports with traces on the ground, electromagnetic effects, or paralysis? Yes, okay, very advanced indeed. And then instant disappearance, shape-changing and dividing, even mind-reading. Uh-oh.

Perhaps the UFOs were never so well behaved as Col. Garrett and Al Loedding pictured them. Surely we had our nonsense filters up and operating back then. Certain cases never made the files. In his later years, Aimé Michel said that the most shameful thing about his career as an investigator was that he just couldn't swallow some of the weirder stuff, and so ignored it. NICAP was certainly guilty of that. Today's Roswell enthusiasts still tend to want to carve the stranger part of the phenomenon away, and there are members of what might be called ufology's right wing who have troubles even with Roswell. Nuts and bolts, nice, well-behaved aerial technology: *That's* a real comfort zone.

I have nothing against this perspective. In fact, I believe that it's a good solid start in dealing with UFOs. So, at the beginning of everything, Garrett, Loedding, Moore, and Nash *were* correct. But much more appears to be real about UFOs as well.

Michael D. Swords is professor emeritus of the Environmental Institute, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.

One of the particular weird ideas that began creeping into researchers' minds was that many cases were instances of "display" by the phenomenon. It was, and is, an odd thought. Display to a witness seems much too subjective and dangerous to really credit. Coincidences happen all the time. We—who are essentially egocentric—often attribute causal linkages and personal significance to things that accidentally cross our path. With thousands of UFO incidents, certainly some rather spectacular coincidences are bound to have happened. And the mind is a wonder at creating syntheses and patterns out of nothing.

But still, some of these coincidences are very hard to dismiss. "Display" seems an operative word, although "performance" might be even more descriptive. The remainder of this article is about one, to me, very impressive form of display.

ALIGNMENT

All display or performance involves alignment, special geometric relationships between objects, environmental parameters, and the observers. These relationships create in the observer's mind the stage upon which the performance takes place. ("It was dead center as I looked out my window.") Time and timing also play a factor in the performance. ("Just as I looked, the object emerged from behind the hillside.") Because there are so many cases where the object was not initially dead center, nor appeared right on cue from stage left, it is usually pretty easy for us to shrug that element off. And I agree. We need to stay rational about this sort of claim. But I would like to present a subset of these cases that involve astronomical alignments that I feel is more difficult to wave off. I'd be interested in whether you agree.

Every category should probably have at least one anchor case, such as Levelland for vehicle interference, or Boianai (Father Gill) for CE3s. My choice for the alignment anchor occurred in 1955. The case record (a letter) originally went to Ted Bloecher at CSI-New York, and then to NICAP, and finally on to the CUFOS archives. I am going to leave names out because you can rarely find any indication in the old files as to whether the witness approved of public mention.

The letter-writer was a prominent engineer working for a big New York city company, an expert in aircraft technology and electronics. And he was an avid amateur astronomer. There were four other witnesses, all interested in amateur astronomy, one of whom was also expert in aircraft.

As a bit of background, a year previously the writer had observed a peculiar fireball, which he reported—for what it was worth—to a Maj. Geyer at Mitchell AFB in Hempstead, New York. The major thanked him for his interest but said that what would be more valuable to the Air Force would be for the writer to urge amateur astronomers to report *any* unusual aerial phenomenon when it occurred. Geyer said, "Anything that flies is our business, even a lame canary." As the writer went on to say to Bloecher, "What follows is the only phenomenon our local group has noted in several hundred hours of astronomical observing."

The sighting occurred at Lake Ronkonkoma on Long Island, between 8:30 and 9:30 p.m. on July 29, 1955. The viewing conditions were excellent and the Moon was two-thirds full. First and second magnitude stars were easily visible and the planet Saturn was prominent.

The UFO initially appeared to the five observers as a "2nd magnitude star" in the vicinity of Saturn. The observers watched, either with naked eyes or binoculars, as the star navigated a "perfect circle (of an apparent diameter of 1°) around Saturn." It then followed this looping performance by heading east until it got to the Moon, where it executed a half-circle pass, and then just disappeared.

Then the object reappeared 120° away and moved horizontally until taking an abrupt turn vertically. It disappeared again at about 70° above the horizon. Then it reappeared in a straight dive-like descent until reacquiring its original 30-degree elevation (see Figure 1). It proceeded horizontally again, made an abrupt angular shift again downwards and was lost in the trees. If it were at typical airliner height its speed would have been about three times that of a commercial flight. Through the binoculars the object looked spherical and yellowish, at least in its central area.

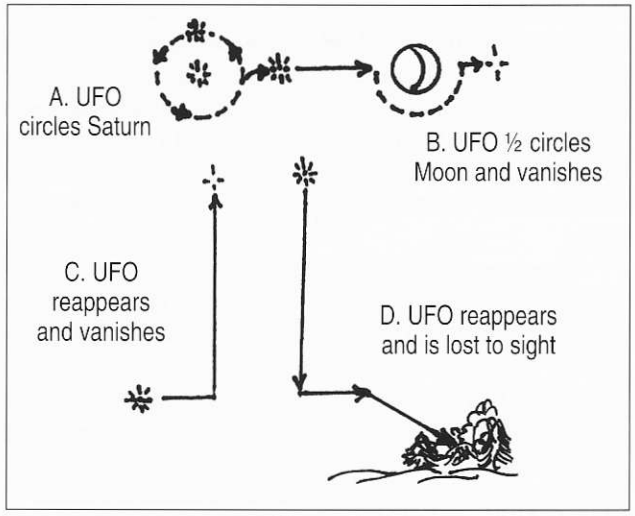


Figure 1.

The witness passed the report on to Bloecher (and presumably to Mitchell AFB) in an amazingly cool, understated way. One wonders how much he cogitated on the ramifications of what he was retelling.

It may be belaboring the obvious, but in order for our five witnesses to see the UFO maneuvering in relation to Saturn and then the Moon as described, they (*almost* certainly, as this depends upon the distance of the UFO) had to be in an extremely privileged viewing position. In the exaggerated cartoon of Figure 2, our observer at B can see the apparent circling of Saturn and the Moon from his location, and observers A and C could too *if the UFO were at astronomical distance* itself. But the closer the UFO is to the observer, the more exclusive such a viewing position becomes, until, at the near extreme in distance of, say, a firefly 10 feet away, only one person could see the circling geometry no matter how close the people tried to cram together. The actual UFO was somewhere between lunar and firefly distance, of course. It seemed similar to an airplane in a size (it did grow larger in the 7×50 binoculars used, though not greatly so), and the amateur astronomers judged it to be probably around normal aircraft altitude. But however large you want to draw an error bar on their estimate, the circle on earth from which you could see the traverse of Saturn and the Moon was pretty small. The UFO seemed to have aligned itself to perform specifically for them. And *that* would mean that it had to know where they were.

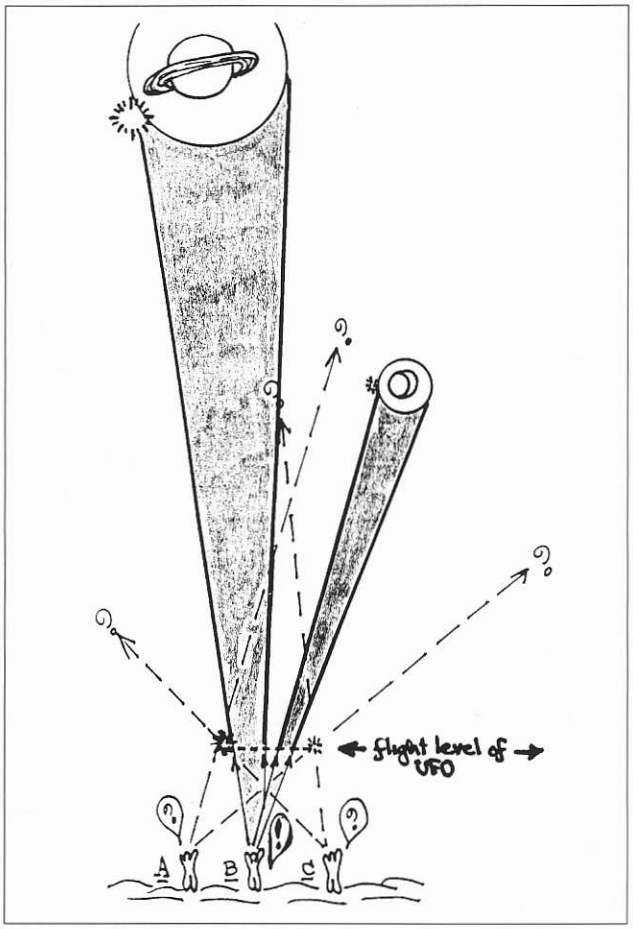


Figure 2.

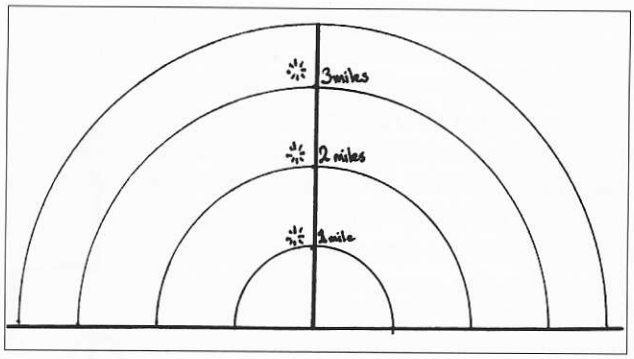


Figure 3.

Just for fun, how tight would that privileged viewing position have to be? If we take the witness guesses seriously, how wide would the area on the ground have to be if the object made a circle of 1° diameter? We can take a stab at it if we want to guess the object's distance (see Figure 3).

If the UFO were a mile high, that would translate into a dome of sky about 16,000 feet in circumference on which it was located; that one degree would then be about 90 feet. In other words, that is the diameter of the circle in which it would be moving as it seemed to circle Saturn. If two miles high, then 180 feet. Ten miles, 900 feet. To simplify the rest of this discussion, let's just assume that it was a mile high. This would mean that the person in the perfect viewing position would be standing, looking up at the image of Saturn in the center of this imaginary circle, while the UFO banked in a 90-foot turn around its circumference. You can imagine a narrow cone from the observer's eye toward Saturn which widens to 90 feet by the time it gets to the height of the UFO.

If you reverse the positions and invert the cone, from the UFO back to the Earth's surface, we get an area of privileged viewing, the same 90-foot diameter circle (Figure 4). But the *real* area of privileged viewing is only the area within which any observer would see the UFO *somewhere* within 1° of Saturn. For instance, standing near the edge of the area one would see the circling UFO run right across or eclipse Saturn at some point in its cycle. So, in order to see the UFO make a "perfect circle" of about 1° around Saturn, and have all five people see it that way, they would have to be in a much smaller area than the 90-foot circle.

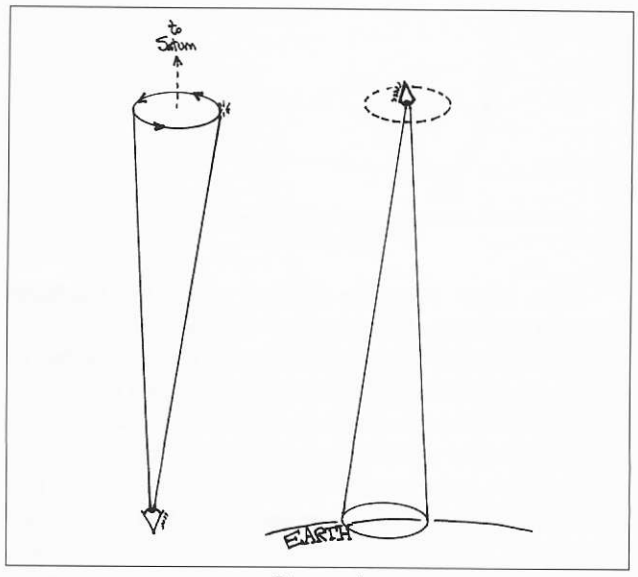


Figure 4.

In my opinion, for the observers to feel that the object circled Saturn perfectly and then perfectly half-circled the Moon, the apparent shift in image (i.e., the position of Saturn or the Moon out of dead center, relatively speaking) had to be *very small* from one observer to the next. I believe that if you walk more than 20% of the distance from the ideal viewing center toward the edge of the 90-foot circle, the apparent circling of the planet and Moon begins to look distinctly lopsided (see Figure 5). So, if you will humor me,

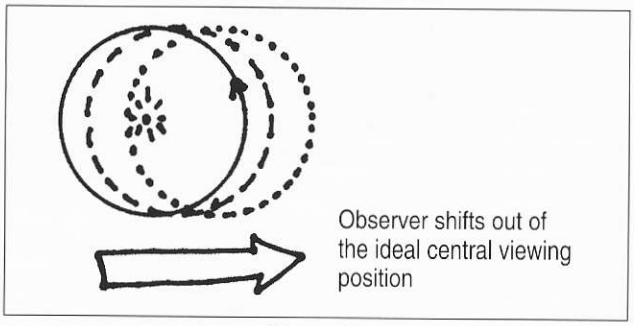


Figure 5.

let's say that the *actual* privileged viewing area for the group was only 20% of the greater diameter or less, which is only 18 feet or fewer. That is a reasonable sized area for five folks to be milling around in on a common activity that evening, but, more importantly, it is a very precise spot on this old planet. If the UFO were two miles high, then double it; three miles, triple it, and so forth.

Even then, it seems a very precise thing to be cruising along three miles above the ground and knowing that a group of people for whom you are about to put on a show are within a small circle below you. And speaking of precise, the UFO then had to move in a precise small circle, at altitude, aligned with Saturn and the Moon. Try that in a plane or even a helicopter.

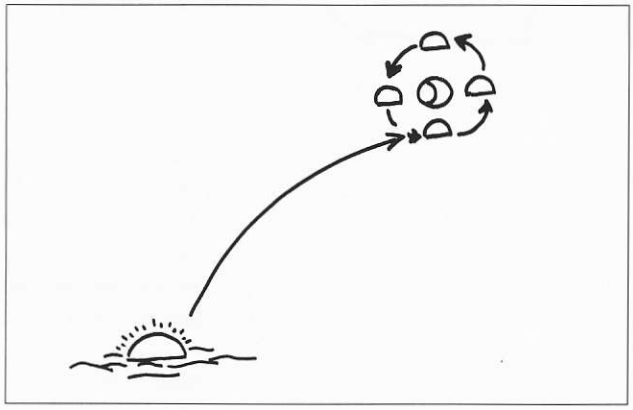
Other Alignment Cases

Hopefully, the first case—the anchor case—has persuaded you that something of this alignment nature actually *does* occur, and that is interesting in its implications. The case seems very sound: five witnesses, high-quality observers of the skies, and elaborate well-reported detail, with movement around two astronomical objects. What more can we ask for other than an ET flight manual with the flight plan? So, if we're somewhat comfortable with this case category, here are a few more of these cases, in brief.

Case Two. NICAP received a letter in 1967 addressed to Maj. Keyhoe. In either August or September of the

previous year, two men were returning from bowling in the middle of the afternoon in Norwood, Massachusetts. The Moon was visible at about three-quarter phase in the sky. Both glanced up and saw a group of six or seven disk-shaped objects moving horizontally toward the Moon. When the objects reached a position just below the Moon they looped it in an upward, back, and onward motion, then continued on their way.

Case Three: Frank Salisbury reports on a case from the UFO-filled Uintah Valley that occurred in 1967. The key element of circling is somewhat garbled in his 1974 book *The Utah UFO Display*, so I'm going to relate what he said clearly at the *Fate* International UFO Conference, held in 1977. On October 14, 1967, a father and son were returning from a fishing trip when they noticed an odd "burning" object parked in the desert. They stopped, got out of their car, and watched. The object lifted off immediately, looking like a half-moon in shape and size (in the air). It then went right over to the real Moon, visible in the sky, and flew a loop around it, keeping its flat side down. It then flew across the Moon's face and left to the northwest. As Salisbury said then, "It was responding to their being there." And it got the geometry precisely right.



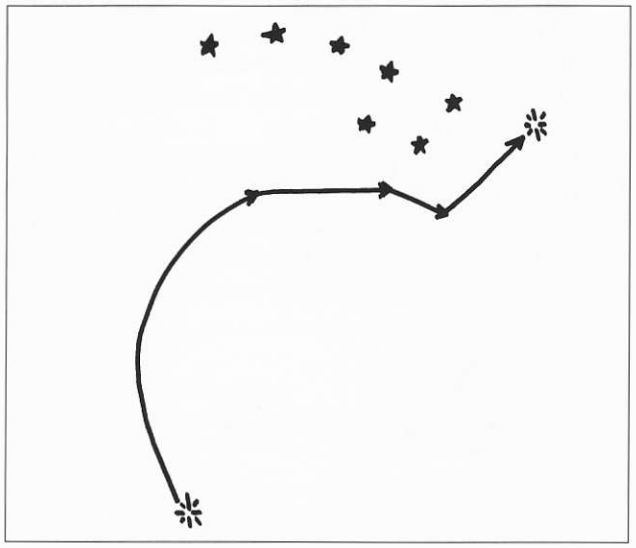
Case Three.

Case Four: The Air Force had less tolerance for this geometric nonsense. A case from Seattle, Washington, on August 12, 1965, was sent to the Air Force. The observer said that a solid star-like object was seen, first circling the Moon, after which it then left for the horizon. The USAF trashed it with the explanation of "overactive imagination."

Case Five: One night in the spring of 1961, Mother Nature was doing what comes naturally, and a young couple was parking outside of Millville, New Jersey. Despite having other things on his mind, the young man could not help being distracted by the antics of a large glowing "meteor" that was dancing around the sky. It was stopping, darting, reversing, and so he finally gave in and called his partner's attention to this insensitive intruder, and they watched together. At one point in its performance, the meteor raced directly at a star, abruptly stopped, drew a neat right-angled, half-box around it, and went racing on. Finally, it grew tired of its dance and boomed away across the sky in about five seconds. What the couple did next is not part of the record.

Case Six: On October 21, 1966, three junior high school kids were standing at one end of their street in Amsterdam, New York, when they noticed a star-like light to the right of the Moon. The star proceeded to draw a right-angle step around the Moon, and continue northward, where it joined two other objects. The three objects began to form 90° angles, equilateral triangles, and other geometrical figures. Two of the friends went home to get binoculars, and while they were away the sky show stopped. The objects remained to be viewed in binoculars, but did little else. The UFOs looked spherical with some sort of lighted, colored areas that rotated. The kids then got bored and went home.

Case Seven: On October 31, 1966, an observer in Gloucester, Massachusetts, saw a particularly bright star in the southwestern part of the sky. The star refused to behave and began to move in a pretty arc until it got below the Big Dipper. At that point it seemed to pace along under the Dipper, and after reaching the bucket end it dropped a bit, and then took a course approximately parallel to the front of the constellation. This one's a bit more of a stretch than the others, I agree, but I include it for consideration.

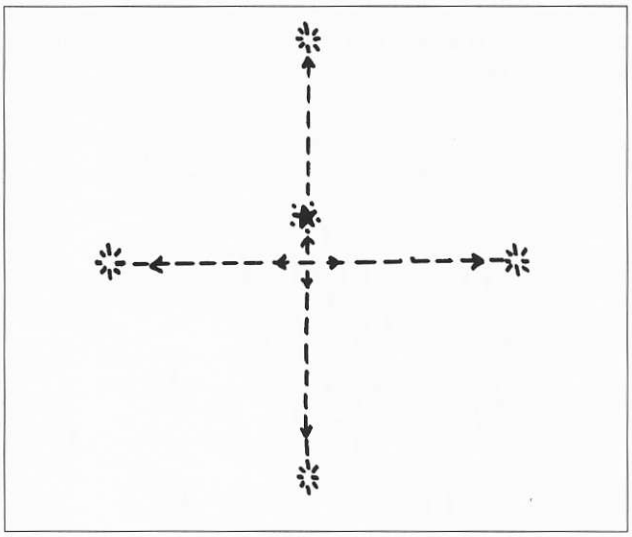


Case Seven.

Case Eight: Just after the peak of the big Michigan Swamp Gas flap in 1966 (Dexter was March 20, Hillsdale was March 21), my current hometown of Kalamazoo had its own series of UFO sightings. (I moved to town in 1971, so was a little late for the show.) These occurred pretty consistently night after night in the latter days of March, ending about April 4. In the middle of this, a wire story reported that students at Western Michigan University had seen a star-like object, which looked football-shaped in binoculars, moving in geometric angles around two bright stars, until it

shot straight up and disappeared. Hmmm. WMU students, eh? I taught them for 30 years. The date? April 1 . . . don't know about this one. But a policeman agreed that he watched it, too.

Case Nine: This is a Timmerman Files case. Sometime in August of about 1967, in Wapakoneta, Ohio, a man was returning to his mother's home at two in the morning. He saw a strangely bright star to the left of Polaris where no such thing should be. As he watched, the star grew a little brighter and began to move. It went directly beneath Polaris and then continued to the right. It repeated this in reverse, and then went under Polaris and stopped. The star then migrated north and south of the Pole Star, tracing out the other elements of a large cross. It did this rapidly several times. Then it came back below Polaris and just sat there. Then it would begin again. As it was getting close to 5 a.m., the witness decided to stop watching. At that, the star went up to Polaris and shot away to the left till it disappeared.



Case Nine.

These cases are a few in the alignment category. If you've looked at lots of cases you know of many more. Those reported here are the result of an almost random happenstance of my receiving a cluster of them in a much larger pile of "odd UFO behavior" cases sent by Frank John Reid of CUFOS (for which I thank him).

Why did I look just then?

The last part of this article will briefly address the other part of these cases. It's all well and good for some weird object to put on an act, but the observer has to cooperate, doesn't he? How many times, though, have you read about the witness exclaiming, "For some reason I had the impulse to look up . . . or go outside . . . or turn around." Not to belabor something that is pretty well known, I'll just give you one such incident (which is *not* an alignment case in the sense of this article but does make the point).

On March 17, 1969, two pilots were flying a small private plane between Phoenix and Lake Havasu, Arizona. As is typical in a small plane, the pilots were slightly restricted in their ability to move about in their seats and had their seatbelts fastened. To their view forward and to the sides, nothing was going on. The pilot in the right seat suddenly had an urge to loosen his seatbelt, rise up, and look

ANOTHER TYPE OF UFO DISPLAY

Recently, by fortuitous coincidence, CUFOS received an older sighting report that is similar to the reports that Michael Swords writes about. The account comes from Mrs. Dianne Vezza, of Marietta, Ohio, who said we could use her name because "I am at an age now where I feel I should report what I saw so many years ago." We appreciate her candor.

The object she saw, along with two companions, was not a true UFO display using astronomical objects for alignment. However, it was certainly a geometrical display by the UFOs that probably could only have been seen from a limited area. For that reason, we reproduce it here, in a paraphrased description from the perspective of Mrs. Vezza.

The sighting

"We were three teen girls sitting on the grass in a backyard in Marietta, Ohio, in 1954 or 1955. It was a warm summer evening. We were laughing and talking when we saw a light like a star moving at an unbelievable speed in the sky. I remember the star coming to a dead stop. Then two other 'stars' sped in and also came to a dead stop. They formed a triangle in the sky—a perfect triangle!

"Almost immediately, an oval shape appeared that seemed to be an object of some sort. The (star-like) lights disappeared, and they were replaced by three of these oval objects in the triangular formation. They then began a light display, with brilliant wildly colored lights that continued for a few beautiful seconds. Then the brilliant lights went out and the UFOs beamed (each one) a bright white light to the center of the triangle. The beams met at the center for a few seconds, and then went out.

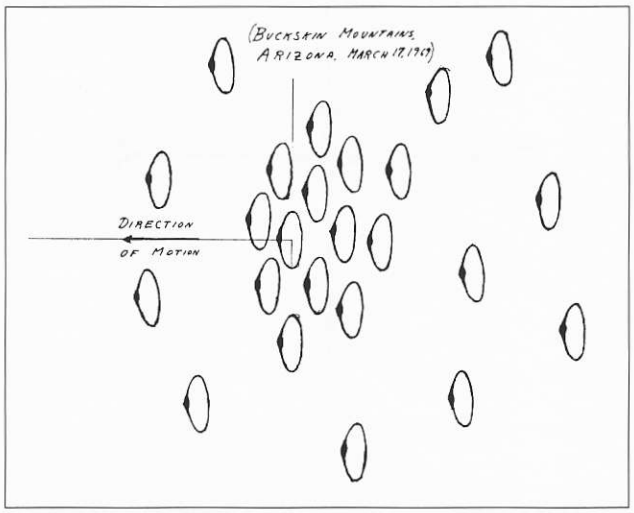
"Now the ovals disappeared and the star-like lights returned. Then, each star sped away into the sky in a different direction, faster than any plane is capable of, then or now. We never heard any sound during the whole incident, which lasted less than a minute.

"We had been conversing beforehand, but afterwards, no one said a sentence. One girl ran for the telephone to call the police.

"For years none of us spoke of what we had seen, believing our friends and families would think we were crazy. Finally, I got up the courage to mention it to the other two gals at a class reunion, and we all recalled the experience."

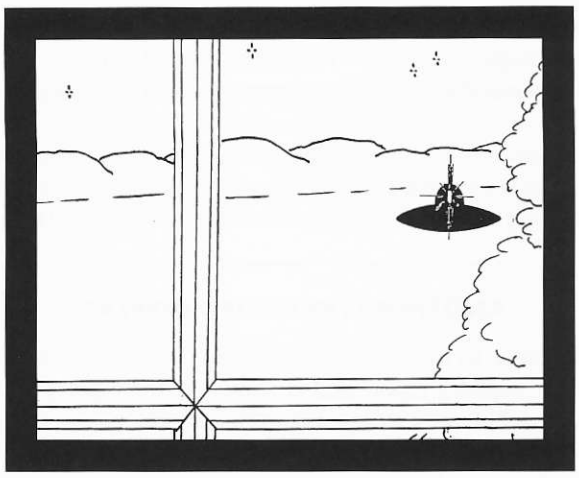
over his partner to the left. He still has no idea why he did this. Upon doing so, he spotted a whole fleet (perhaps as many as two dozen) of objects flying very low and in a rough formation. In a period of about 20 seconds, the two men watched the fleet pass well below their aircraft and beyond. They would never have noticed this cluster of UFOs had one of them not acted upon his mysterious urge to raise up and look across and down from the plane.

The UFOs were oval disks of a flat white color. There seemed to be a black blur around the edges of each object. There was a hint of a "blister" near the front. Their speed was about 300 to 400 mph. The only maneuvers they made were pitch and roll, which all the objects made instantly in perfect unison. This is a case that was checked out by Dr. James McDonald in his usual thorough manner.



So why did the pilot look when he did? Why do we? It reminded me of an aspect of my own UFO observation in (about) August 1959. My brother and I were listening to a report of a UFO live on radio station WCHS (I think that was the station) out of Charleston, West Virginia. Tom and I were sitting in our home (around dusk) and Hugh McPherson, a UFO-loving deejay, was allowing an off-duty station engineer to describe a UFO that he was viewing at the time. The report was coming over the beeper phone.

We'd gone out to look but saw nothing. (St. Albans, our town, was about 17 miles downriver from Charleston, and the engineer was further yet.) We went back in and after a while, the engineer, who was giving us the impression that the UFO was getting further away from him downriver, said that the object had begun moving rapidly to his left. Tom and I decided not to bother to go outside again but just walk to the north end of the house and look out. Our house was a long ranch and we had several feet to walk on its long axis. As I approached the door to that last bedroom, the hair prickled on the back of my neck and (I'm not going to swear to this next bit because it's so subjective, but . . .) it was as if a little voice said: "Hurry." For whatever reason, I ran the last steps to the end window and threw up the window shade. There—immediately on cue stage right—the UFO, a nice little



domed-disk with revolving top, appeared to cruise quietly across the window, tree to tree.

For years, I've held on to my objective view of that thing, and charged the side issues off to coincidence. But, reading so many other resonating cases, you have to wonder.

So what's it all about? Perhaps events like these and the alignment cases could be coincidence. Or it could be rare breakthroughs of a bit of clairvoyance in a normally non-psychic guy like me. Or, maybe, the UFO scriptwriters not only want to put on their plays but want the audience to be seated on time. The alignments seem to indicate that, if they want to, "they know exactly where you live." The occasional urges to be specifically somewhere and looking specifically some place at a certain time may reveal that the dramatists can tap into our consciousness at a distance as well.

All that should be plenty to give the UFO researcher pause. All that available information. All that manipulative ability. All that control. It is a far cry from Col. Mack McCoy at Wright-Patterson in the Project Sign days, when the UFOs were just flying metal disks operated by ET fly-boys just a little ahead of us. Many of our research colleagues still want them to be that simple. I would, too. It would give me more confidence in figuring this thing out without depending upon nibbles of handouts from a bunch of inscrutable dramatists who refuse to ever reveal the plot in which we play our roles. ✦

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SELENITES

BY JEROME CLARK

At least 4.5 billion years old, the moon is generally thought to have been formed out of debris from the young earth's collision with a slightly smaller celestial body, perhaps about the size of Mars. Its mean distance from the earth is 238,000 miles, and it is 2,160 miles in diameter. A flurry of meteoritic impacts and, later, volcanic activity shaped the bulk of its surface features between 4 and 2.5 billion years ago. Since then, the moon has remained essentially stable except for the now much rarer encounter with meteorite or comet.

Speculation about lunar life, including proto–science fiction literature on the subject, goes back to the ancients, who observed the moon's face and discerned what they inferred to be oceans, land masses, and vegetation. In the late middle ages, after telescopes were directed toward the moon, the debate did not end; if anything, it intensified. In 1638 the clergyman and amateur scientist John Wilkins (1614–1672) wrote in his book *The Discovery of a World in the Moone*:

> That those spots and brighter parts which by our sight might be distinguished in the Moon, do show the difference between the Sea and Land of that other World. . . .
>
> The spots represent the Sea, and the bright parts Land. . . .
>
> That there are high mountains, deep valleys, and spacious plains in the body of the Moon. . . .
>
> That there is an atmosphere, or an orb of gross vaporous air, immediately encompassing the body of the Moon. . . .
>
> That it is probable there may be inhabitants in this other World, but of what kind they are is uncertain.

Though many educated and influential men of his time agreed with the premise, others scoffed. The Italian astronomer and lunar mapmaker Giovanni Riccioli (1598–1671) stated flatly, "No man dwells on the moon," and held that the moon is dry, dead, and inhospitable to life. On the other hand, Riccioli's contemporary Johannes Hevelius (1611–1687), a Polish astronomer and cartographer of the moon, argued for oceans and "selenites," as he called the beings who he believed lived on the land areas or continents.

A number of moon-life advocates came from a more or less explicitly theological premise which embraced—sometimes demanded—the presence of intelligent entities on all worlds, not necessarily excluding asteroids and comets. In the words of James Ferguson (1710–1776), the Scottish autodidact and popular writer on astronomy, God created "an inconceivable number of suns, systems, and Worlds, dispersed through boundless space. . . . From what we know of our own System, it may be reasonably concluded that all the rest are with equal wisdom contrived, situated, and provided with accommodations for rational inhabitants . . . ten thousand times ten thousand Worlds . . . peopled with myriads of intelligent beings, formed for endless progression in perfection and felicity." In a multivolume biblical commentary published between 1817 and 1825, the Methodist clergyman Adam Clarke infers from Old Testament references that there "is scarcely any doubt remaining in the philosophical world, that the moon is a *habitable globe*. . . . All the *planets* and their *satellites* . . . are inhabited; for matter seems only to exist for the sake of intelligent beings."

Sir William Herschel

Among the greatest astronomers, honored for his discovery of Uranus in 1781, often thought of as a model empiricist, Sir William Herschel (1738–1822) is less known for his obsessive interest in intelligent extraterrestrial life in the solar system and beyond. In the assessment of historian of science Michael J. Crowe, who examined many of Herschel's unpublished papers, "pluralism was a core component in Herschel's research program and as such influenced many of his astronomical endeavors." Herschel believed that life existed on the moon; he also thought—first certainly, then less so—that he had observed evidence of it through his telescope.

In the mid-1770s Herschel turned his telescope to the lunar surface and began writing journal entries in which he

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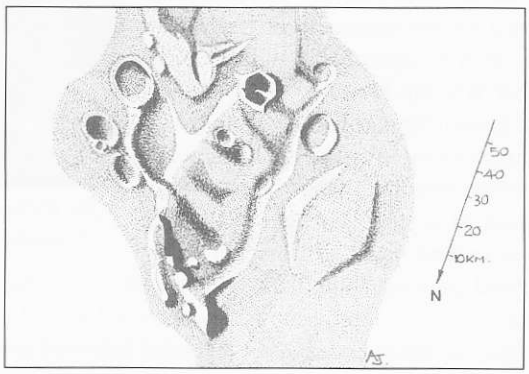
Jerome Clark, co-editor of IUR, *is author, most recently, of* Unnatural Phenomena *(ABC-CLIO, 2005). This is the last of three articles about the lore of intelligent life on earth's closest planetary neighbors. Previous pieces in the series were "Conversations with Martians" (*IUR *29:3) and "Venusian Dreams" (*IUR *30:1).*

detailed sightings of immense trees, forests, and pastures. By 1778 he was seeing "circuses"—circular formations—which in his estimation represented cities, towns, and villages. Through 1783, after which his attentions were attracted elsewhere, canals, roads, and patches of vegetation caught his eye, or at least his imagination. None of this appeared in any of his published work, however, probably because in time Herschel grew more sensitive to the limitations of the telescopes of his time and entertained doubts about what he had, in fact, seen. Telescopes had played "many tricks" on him, he confided to a friend, and it was only after considerable experience that he felt confident of accurate observations through them. From then on, when he talked of extraterrestrials, he made no claim to eyewitness validation of his own.

Franz von Gruithuisen

Less restrained, the German astronomer Franz von Paula Gruithuisen (1774–1852) got so carried away that even colleagues sympathetic to the idea of a populated moon recoiled. In an 1824 paper boldly titled "Discovery of Many Distinct Traces of Lunar Inhabitants, Especially of One of Their Colossal Buildings," he argued (in part one) for vegetation, which he said he had seen, and for animals (in part two). He did not claim to have observed the latter but to have discerned the paths they left in their migrations; the animals travel "from 50 northern latitude up to 37 or possibly 47 southern latitude." Gruithuisen reserved the most sensational revelations for the third part, where he outlined observations of lunar structures: walls, forts, roads, cities. A structure with a starlike shape was surely a "temple," he judged, and an indication that the people of the moon are religious.

Colleagues such as Carl Friedrich Gauss (Göttingen Observatory) and Joseph Johann von Littrow (Vienna Observatory) thought that Gruithuisen's imagination was running away with him, but—even if more cautious in stating so publicly—they took the idea of lunar intelligences seriously, even proposing methods with which to communicate with them. Another Gruithuisen critic, Bremen astronomer Wilhelm Olbers, judged the presence both of vegetation and of sentient entities on the moon to be "very probable."



Gruithuisen's lunar city structure, drawn by British astronomer Andrew Johnson from an observation on May 10, 1992. From Gerald North, Observing the Moon *(Cambridge University, 2000).*

Many (albeit not all) astronomers agreed, enough to inspire a notorious series of pieces in the *New York Sun* published between August 25 and 31, 1835, and written—as revealed subsequently—by Richard Adams Locke (1800–1871). The first story bore this headline:

GREAT ASTRONOMICAL DISCOVERIES
Lately Made
By Sir John Herschel, LL.D, F.R.S., &c
At the Cape of Good Hope

Sir John Herschel

Sir John Herschel, a real-life astronomer (1792–1871) and the son of Sir William, was actually conducting telescopic observations from the Cape of Good Hope at the time—he was there from 1833 to 1838—which in an age of slow-moving international communication ensured no speedy rebuttal. Locke credited Sir John with a telescope of such power that it could pick up objects on the lunar surface as little as 18 inches long. The astronomer saw animals, one like a goat with a horn, the other a rolling, spherical-shaped amphibian, then bipeds with both human and bat features (he was even able to observe them in conversation with one another), and, finally, a superior species of man-bats "of infinitely greater personal beauty" and angelic aura.

Richard Adams Locke

Lunar animals allegedly discovered by Sir John Herschel.

The press of the time noted and circulated the stories, and some leading newspapers expressed full confidence in their veracity. Credulity was rampant, according to the celebrated critic and fantasist Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849). "Not one person in ten discredited it," he wrote with something between amusement and outrage, "and (strangest point of all!) the doubters were chiefly those who doubted without being able to say why—the ignorant, those uninformed in astronomy, people who *would not* believe because the thing was so novel, so entirely 'out of the usual way.'"

As the story spun out of control, Locke quietly put the word out that he had written it and that it wasn't, in point of fact, true. After that, denunciations were ringing as resoundingly as endorsements had been just days before. In a mostly ignored and forgotten public statement a few years later, Locke was to insist that he had not meant to fool anyone, that his purposes were satirical. In other words, he had simply poked fun at exotic, unfounded speculations about the moon's inhabitants and at popular gullibility. In any event, Locke's tales were destined to be called ever after the "moon hoax." Ironically, Sir John Herschel, the real one, was later to champion (in an 1858 book) the likelihood of "animal or vegetable life" on the far side of the moon.

Camille Flammarion (1842–1925), the French scientist, popular author, and "leading advocate of extreme pluralism" (in the words of modern astrobiological chronicler David Darling), dismissed those who argued that with no atmosphere the moon could not sustain life; they possessed, he sniffed, all the reasoning powers of "a fish." To the contrary, he insisted in an 1877 work, changes on its surface visible from earth may be "due to the vegetable kingdom or even the animal kingdom, or—who knows?—to some living formations which are neither vegetable nor animal." Interpretations like these were far from universally embraced—many astronomers by now deemed them nonsensical, and those who thought otherwise found themselves more and more on the defensive—but they were surprisingly persistent.

Camille Flammarion

For example, in 1902 American astronomer William Henry Pickering (1858–1938), an outspoken proponent of alleged Martian canals then at the center of a furious international scientific controversy which seems inexplicable from this distance, reported changes in the lunar landscape—best explained, he wrote in *Century* magazine, as evidence of an atmosphere containing water vapor. If there was water vapor, then surely there could be vegetable life, at least. He acknowledged, however, that intelligent beings living under lunar conditions would be unimaginable and unworthy of consideration. Then he apparently changed his mind. He had been seeing lunar "canals"—which he first attributed to strips of vegetation—for more than a decade when he confided to his older, more conservative brother, Harvard College Observatory director Edward Charles Pickering, "I have seen everything practically except the selenites themselves running round with spades to turn off the water into other canals."

W. H. Pickering

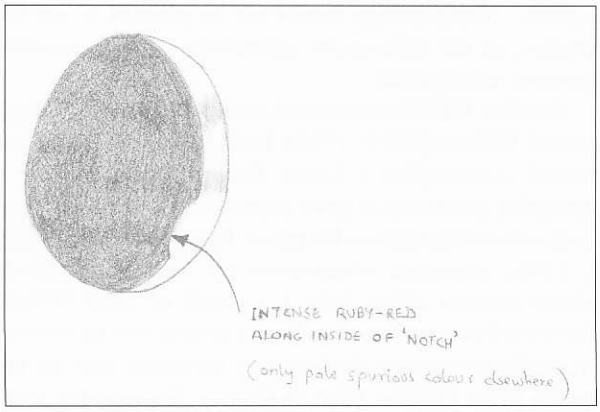
William Pickering voiced no such assertions in any public forum, but in the mid-1920s he did theorize that changes heretofore laid to seasonal changes in vegetation now evinced the migrations of vast insect swarms or—he also thought possible—migrations of seal-like animals. He remained an advocate of lunar life well past his retirement as astronomer and was writing about it almost up to his death. No scientist of any repute since then has associated him- or herself with any comparable notions.

Mystic moon

Naturally, not just scientists have had their say about who may abide on earth's satellite. The Swedish scientist-turned-spiritual pilgrim Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) visited the moon in a visionary or out-of-body state, returning to relate that its inhabitants are "as small as children of six years old, their voice proceeds from the stomach, and they creep about."

In 1837 Joseph Smith (1805–1844), founder of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (otherwise known as Mormonism), is alleged to have given a blessing, or perhaps merely expressed a personal opinion, in which he pronounced—as Oliver B. Huntington, who heard it, would recall, paraphrasing Smith's words—"The moon [is] inhabited by men and women the same as on this earth, and... they [live] for a greater age than we do—that they live generally to near the age of 1,000 years." The men, averaging a height of six feet, wear clothing in the "Quaker style." Mormon apologists have furiously disputed Huntington's account, but the views attributed to Smith of a moon inhabited by intelligent, humanlike beings reflected widely shared popular, and even scientific, opinion of the time, and if true, they hardly make him any more misguided than many of his fellow citizens.

Speculations about intelligences on the moon would get new life after World War II, when sightings of puzzling sky objects ignited widespread interest in flying saucers and eventually theories about alien bases. Transient lunar phenomena (TLPs), as they are called, have played a significant role in all of this as well. TLPs consist of unexplained



Visual anomaly (TLP) recorded by astronomer Gerald North in the crater Aristarchus, May 30, 1985.

changes in the lunar surface, sometimes including unusual lights, shadows, and moving objects. Though some astronomers sought to explain such occurrences as mere optical illusions, others regard them as genuine anomalies and over time have prevailed. In December 2005 geophysicist Gary Olhoeft, citing recent NASA research, stated, "It may be that TLPs are caused by sunlight reflecting off rising plumes of electrostatically lofted lunar dust." It is also certain, however, that Olhoeft's will not be the final word on the subject.

TLPs—not called that until the mid-20th century—interested Charles Fort (1874–1932), the famous chronicler of unexplained physical phenomena and pre-UFO-era theorist of extraterrestrial visitation. Fort, who had an unquenchable sense of humor, noted observations of changing geometric shapes in the crater Linné and remarked wryly:

> Astronomers have thought of trying to communicate with Mars or the moon by means of great geometric constructions placed conspicuously, but there is nothing so attractive to attention as change, and a formation that would appear and disappear would enhance the geometric with the dynamic. That the units of the changing compositions that covered Linné were the lunarians themselves—that Linné was terraced—hosts of the inhabitants of the moon standing upon ridges of their Cheops of the Serene Sea, some of them dressed in white and standing in a border, and some of them dressed in black, centering upon the apex, or the dark material of the apex left clear for the contrast, all of them unified in a hope of conveying an impression of the geometric, as the product of design, and distinguishable from the topographic, to the shining god [earth] that makes the stars of their heaven marginal.

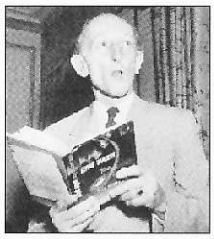
Less mirthful notions show up in 1950s UFO books, such as *Flying Saucers on the Attack* (1954; *Flying Saucers on the Moon* in its original British edition) by Harold Tom Wilkins (1891–1960), where it is stated as simple fact that "the moon . . . long has been a stopover for what we call flying saucers." Wilkins predicted that the first astronauts to land there would find "massive portals" leading to "great sublunar tunnels" housing "beings of other unknown worlds in space." These beings would not be pleased to see the intruders, as the subsequent unleashing of their superior firepower would attest.

Another Wilkins, respected amateur astronomer Hugh Percival Wilkins (1896–1960), head of the British Astronomical Association's Lunar Section, would make a remarkable claim which gave impetus to UFO-based theories about intelligences on the moon. Its genesis was in a July 29, 1953, telescopic observation by *New York Herald Tribune* science editor John J. O'Neill of what O'Neill believed to be an immense bridge—a natural one, he stressed in a public statement—linking two mountain tops on the western Mare Crisium (Sea of Crises). Because his four-inch refracting telescope was a relatively modest instrument, he wrote Wilkins, who worked with a larger instrument, to ask him to examine the designated region. On the evening of August 26, when a doubtful Wilkins scrutinized the site, he was surprised to see—or at least think he saw—the bridge. Sadly, O'Neill died before he received Wilkins's letter of confirmation.

That, however, did not end the matter. On December 23, interviewed on British radio, Wilkins stated flatly, "Now this is a real bridge. Its span is about 20 miles from one side to the other, and it's probably at least 5000 feet or so from the surface beneath." He went on, "It looks artificial. It's almost incredible that such a thing could have been formed in the first instance, or if it *was* formed, could have lasted during the ages in which the moon has been in existence. You would have expected it either to be disintegrated by temperature variations or by meteor impact. . . . It looks almost like an engineering job. . . . Yes, it is most extraordinary." On June 17, 1954, visiting southern California, Wilkins studied Mare Crisium with the 100-inch reflecting telescope at Mount Wilson Observatory and sighted the bridge again.

But other amateur astronomers were seeing something different, namely the effects of light from a low sun upon this particular part of the lunar landscape. Subsequent viewing, for example from the Lunar Orbiter in the 1960s, has conclusively established that no such object, whether natural phenomenon or engineered structure, exists. But at the time, even in the face of ridicule which soon led him to resign from the BAA, Wilkins stuck to his conviction.

Donald E. Keyhoe (1897–1988), a retired Marine Corps major and the most famous UFO proponent of his time, reported the observations of O'Neill and Wilkins (the latter of whom harbored heretical UFO sympathies), along with others of (more genuinely anomalous) TLPs, and from them spun some fanciful theories. In his book *The Flying Saucer Conspiracy* (1955) he wondered if an intelligent lunar race, a few centuries ahead of its counterpart on earth, grew alarmed as it became apparent that earthlings would soon bring their bombs, wars, and violent ways to the moon; consequently, they launched observational vehicles—UFOs—to monitor terrestrial activity. Or maybe the "moon race have been enslaved and forced to build the space base for outsiders. . . . It was even possible that a strong moon race, perhaps with unknown weapons, could have overwhelmed the space visitors might be in control. As to which was the right answer, I could only speculate. But the evidence of *some* intelligent race on the moon seemed undeniable."



Donald Keyhoe

M. K. Jessup

There was also Morris Ketchum Jessup (1900–1959). Jessup had an educational background in astronomy and experience as a working scientist. He did undergraduate and graduate work at the

University of Michigan. In the late 1920s he and associates from the university set up a large refracting telescope in South Africa, employing it to discover many double stars. Jessup never finished the work necessary for a Ph.D. (though in later years he was often identified as "Dr. Jessup"), and he left astronomy to pursue his own archaeological interests in Mexico and Peru. When flying saucers came along, Jessup would write four books, distinguished both because one (*The Case for the* UFO, 1955) was the first to use the new phrase "UFO" in the title and also because they contained some strikingly original, if unconvincing, ruminations on the nature and origin of UFO intelligences.

In *The Expanding Case for the UFO* (1957) archaeological artifacts meet lunar anomalies (authentic and otherwise) and wed in a shotgun marriage uniting free-wheeling guesswork to staggering silliness. In general outline, if not in specific detail, it anticipates the "ancient-astronaut" craze generated by Erich (*Chariots of the Gods?*) von Däniken and his imitators in the 1970s. Jessup stated, "There are 'little people' in African and New Guinea jungles today. They have been written about, photographed, measured and studied. But *nobody* knows their origin or ancestry. They are, perhaps, one of the 'erratics' of ethnology. Were these people, these isolated tribes, 'planted' in the tropical African jungle from UFO [sic] thousands of years ago? Did UFO [sic] land, or crash, and establish racial germs or colonies?"

After noting the occurrence of TLPs over the centuries, he proceeds to decree it arguably possible that these pygmies either arrived originally from the moon or colonized it from here, having developed an advanced technology based on levitation and antigravity. "We have reason to believe," he wrote, "that space flight may have been in existence for 70,000 to 100,000 years, [and] there is reason to believe that space flight derives from a time in the pre-cataclysmic era which developed a first wave of civilization. . . . If we do, indeed, have 'little people' within the UFO [sic], as reported by observers of varying responsibility, then we may assume that the Pygmies, at some remote epoch, developed a civilization which discovered the principle of gravitation and put it to work." They reside on the earth, the moon, and in giant spacecraft located in space between the two in a zone of gravitational neutrality.

No one endorsed or expanded on Jessup's moon-connected superpygmies, but some UFO and esoteric literature continued—up to the present—to explore the connection between the moon and extraterrestrials based there. The *NICAP Bulletin* for January 1959, reporting the observation of domelike objects on the moon, wondered if these were "possibly structures built by unknown space travelers." Writing in England's *Flying Saucer Review* (January/February 1960), W. Raymond Drake advanced the notion that the moon's surface appears as it does because long ago the lunarians devastated it in a nuclear conflict, either with each other or with hostile invaders. Surviving lunarians crawled into "deep caverns with air and water," and it is from there that they dispatch saucers earthward. As it happens, the moon is not quite what it appears to be. "Our belt of atmosphere hundreds of miles thick may have some of the properties of a giant lens, which magnifies the Moon to twenty times its real size," according to Drake. In Ray Palmer's *Flying Saucers* magazine, Guy J. Cyr, a Catholic priest, imagined a moon awash in life and oceans and, of course, spaceships, and Robert W. Russel conjured up lunarians residing in great numbers under crater floors.

As pictures of the lunar surface proliferated, from improved photographic and telescopic technology on earth and from shots taken from spacecraft near or on the moon, enthusiasts pored over them in search of alien artifacts. A hoax published in a September 1969 issue of the now-defunct supermarket tabloid *National Bulletin*, which concocted the story in its editorial office and gave it a bogus byline, purported to show censored transcripts of communications between NASA's Mission Control and the Apollo 11 moon landing (the first) on July 20, 1969. The discussion concerned sightings of extraterrestrial spacecraft in the astronauts' vicinity. In the mid-1970s, in the pulp newsstand magazine *Saga's UFO Report*, Joseph Goodavage contributed sensationalistic material, cited in most subsequent writings on the subject, supposedly demonstrating evidence of lunar extraterrestrial activity.

Books by Don Wilson (*Our Mysterious Spaceship Moon*, 1975, and *Secrets of Our Spaceship Moon*, 1979), Jean Sendy (*The Moon: Outpost of the Gods*, 1975), and George H. Leonard (*Somebody Else Is on the Moon*, 1976) put forth variations on the theme of moon-as-ET-colony-and-launching-pad, drawing their inspiration largely from creative interpretations of ambiguous photographic images. Wilson championed an especially outlandish allegation, namely that the moon itself is a hollow spacecraft. "The greatest UFO in our skies is there for everyone to see," he proclaimed, possibly with tongue in cheek.

Fred Steckling of the George Adamski Foundation was responsible for another notable book in the genre. In *We Discovered Alien Bases on the Moon* (1982) he sought to prove that the contactee's claims of an extraterrestrial presence there (see below) were not, as critics thought, absurd fiction. The book sparked a devastating refutation by well-informed amateur astronomer and moon-watcher Francis G. Graham, head of the Pennsylvania Selenological Society. Graham's monograph opens with these wry words:

> Fred Steckling believes the US moon program discovered aliens on the moon, and the lunar program is continuing under great secrecy, in order to establish contact with the UFOs; further, some people in the government have in fact duplicated a crashed UFO . . . and are using that for transport to the moon. It is not clear [to] which George Pal movie Mr. Steckling has been tuning his cosmic Interrossiter, but it is certainly not tuned to reality, if one compares his book to the main body of scientific knowledge as a yardstick of what

constitutes his view of the reality of the moon.

But perhaps conventional lunar science is wrong and Mr. Steckling is right. What evidence does he produce? Mr. Steckling shows 150 photos and drawings. One of these, of himself, we can believe. The remaining 149 demand critical appraisal. Of those 149, 15 are of Earth UFOs, postage stamps, and pond water.

Travelers' tales

"As my space friends had promised, they took me on my first trip to the moon the second week of August, 1956," New Jersey sign painter and contactee Howard Menger relates matter-of-factly in the first sentence of a chapter of his *From Outer Space to You* (1959). The trip, however, ended disappointingly. Menger and his friends, both space people and earthlings, orbited the moon but did not land on it. Through a screen he saw dome-shaped structures.

Howard Menger

Fortunately, Menger got a return trip the next month, and this time he was permitted to step onto the surface—with a camera yet. In his book, one photograph, showing a saucer approaching a dome, notes, "The author was permitted to take only a few photographs," but was still keeping several under wraps, while others "did not come out well." He reported, "For some reason I was never allowed to take photographs of surface detail, people, their mechanical installations and the like." Sadly, the result was that none of the published photographs looks like anything that could not have been produced on a kitchen table. One critic observed at the time, "These photos are so evidently faked that it is almost foolish to even criticize them."

Unlike other contactees Menger did not aver that the lunar landscape is livable (though he does give the moon an atmosphere which, of course, more prosaic astronomical doctrine does not afford it), but that the space people from other planets (primarily Venus) who reside there live inside the domes. He and hundreds of other earthlings from an assortment of nations were led on a guided tour which took them from dome to dome. "All of us were shown musical instruments, samples of art and architecture, and other interesting things," Menger vaguely recalled. Going on even less helpfully, if that's conceivable, he added, "In fact [sic] one building was like an interplanetary world's fair, with each planet represented by some sort of contribution in art, technology and so on."

If anything, contactee Buck Nelson, an Ozarks farmer who may fairly be characterized as an unlettered hillbilly, had even fewer details about his lunar adventure, which took place nearly a year and a half before Menger's, in April 1955. Nelson's principal contact was Little Bucky, an earthling expatriate who now considered Venus home.

Little Bucky and two extraterrestrial associates (one the oddly monikered "Bob Solomon") showed up at midnight on April 24 to fulfill a promise to take Buck Nelson into space. In return, as Nelson would write, "I would tell about it to the world." Buck held up his share of the bargain, writing and peddling a not fully literate booklet with the to-the-point title *My Trip to Mars, the Moon, and Venus* (1956).

What the world learned was that after a stopover on Mars, where he and his dog Teddy, who accompanied him

(continued on page 26)

Just for Fun

In a previous "Just for Fun" (*IUR* 29:4, pp. 20–21) you were asked some trivia questions associated with some serious individuals involved with the UFO story. This time we'll give equal time to our congenial lunatics, the old-time contactees. Link the statements in the right-hand column to the contactee listed in the left-hand column. Answers are on page 26.—*Michael D. Swords.*

Contactees:

1. George Adamski
2. Orfeo M. Angelucci
3. Truman Bethurum
4. Woody Derenberger
5. Daniel W. Fry
6. Howard Menger
7. Buck Nelson
8. Reinhold O. Schmidt
9. George W. Van Tassell
10. George Hunt Williamson

Statements:

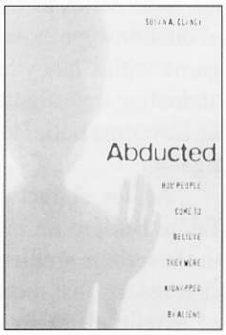
A. Explored secret Mayan caves with Joseph Manson Valentine of Bermuda Triangle fame.
B. Claimed to be a distant part of the royal family of Serbia.
C. Was married to Hollywood starlet Jennifer Holt.
D. Was Most Reverend Bishop of the Syro-Chaldean Archdiocese of North America.
E. Was one of the last people to see Morris Jessup alive.
F. Wrote an unperformed "Broadway play" giving his answer to the Secret of the Grail.
G. Was an initiated member of the Chippewa Indian tribe.
H. Was a member of the Knights of Malta.
I. Was falsely accused of murdering his first wife in Peru.
J. Was an illustrator and advertising copywriter for Celoltex.

ABDUCTED BY HER BELIEFS

BY MARK RODEGHIER

Susan Clancy, *Abducted: How People Come to Believe They Were Kidnapped by Aliens*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 2005. $22.95.

Social scientists, chiefly psychologists, have been examining the abduction phenomenon—really just abductees—for more than a decade. They began this work in the early 1990s after abductions became a subject of popular culture and media interest, and hence reached the attention of academics. Essentially all this research began with the assumption that abductions are not real and must have some other cause unrelated to aliens or other external forces.



These supposed causes are quite diverse, including such things as fantasy proneness, masochism, sleep paralysis, hynagogic and hypnopompic imagery, investigators and therapists who unwittingly plant abduction memories in the minds of abductees, and the meaning that abduction beliefs provide as a substitute for religion. This list is not quite exhaustive, but you get the point. While social scientists all agreed that abductions were not real, they differed greatly on their causes.

Why are these theories so varied? Have psychologists agreed, by now, on a primary cause for abduction accounts? If not, why?

Those questions bring us to the most recent addition to this literature on the abduction phenomenon, the book *Abducted* by former Harvard postdoc Susan Clancy. It is, like all books on abductions (whether by UFO investigators or skeptics), written for the general public, not a specialized audience. Clancy bases the book on her own research on abductees, most of which was done with her mentor, Richard McNally, plus her own speculations on the meaning of abductions to those who have the experience.

The book is designed, as its subtitle tells us, to explain "how people come to believe they were kidnapped by aliens." Ultimately, the book fails in its primary goal, revealing more about the beliefs of Clancy and other psychologists than the abductees. Yet the book does make a contribution to the debate about abductions, though not one that Clancy readily recognizes.

Clancy writes in a breezy style, and even though you may often disagree with her conclusions, the book is easy to read and keeps your attention. She is not above telling disparaging stories about herself, and from these, and some rather injudicious comments scattered throughout the text, it seems fair to characterize her as someone who "shoots from the hip." For example, consider this statement: "Ten years from now, believing in aliens and in their presence among us will perhaps become as common as believing in God." There are so many problems with this that I hardly know where to begin a critique. It makes for a memorable quote, but it is a rather meaningless statement, and not one (I'd lay big money) likely to come true in 10 years, however you interpret it.

There are both small and large things wrong with Clancy's argument and even her use of the UFO literature and discussion of specific cases. I won't belabor these failings in this review; a few instances will suffice. But I want to also be fair and point out what Clancy got right, two things in particular. Clancy, unlike almost every skeptical social scientist who has studied abductees, engaged in lengthy conversations with her subjects prior to their enrollment in her studies. As a consequence, she did learn some things about people who self-identify as possible abductees.

First, she came to realize that most people who contact UFO and abduction investigators and think they might be abductees don't meet any reasonable definition of that category. Second, she understands these people are trying to make sense of odd and anomalous experiences they have had, and that they find the abduction experience offers them a ready-made cultural script that "explains" their own life's oddities. ("Alien-abduction beliefs reflect attempts to explain odd, unusual, and perplexing experiences.")

The sane and sensible abduction investigators I know are well familiar with the common experience of being contacted by someone who saw odd lights, has unexplained bruises, had a vivid dream about UFOs and aliens, or feels uneasy when reading books by Budd Hopkins or David Jacobs, and thinks that he or she might be an abductee. But the majority of this group has no experience of an actual abduction event, and most won't after further discussions, or even an investigation. In other words, for whatever reason (and I return to this below), many people who think they might be abductees simply are not (and fortunate for them).

Clancy soon recognized the existence of this type of

abduction claimant and struggled to understand why some individuals would turn to the abduction phenomenon as an explanation. Unlike other social scientists who tend to promote one primary cause, Clancy is sensible enough to recognize that there are several pathways that eventually wind to roughly the same spot. As she writes in the conclusion, "I am arguing that alien-abduction memories are best understood as resulting from a blend of fantasy-proneness, memory distortion, culturally available scripts, sleep hallucinations, and scientific illiteracy, aided and abetted by the suggestions and reinforcement of hypnotherapy."

We can quibble with the details, but the idea that abduction beliefs are multicausal is a good one. *Some* people who think they are abductees have that belief for a complex of reasons, probably something close to what Clancy lists in this quote. Note that, like most skeptics now, there is no talk of mental illness or impaired functioning among abductees, although Clancy does see evidence of schizotypy—magical thinking and perceptual aberration—among her abductee sample. Abductees may be odd, but they are not abnormal.

Clancy, though, did something odd herself, caused not just by her skepticism, but also by her own beliefs. She *knows* that abductions aren't real, but she wanted to study abductees. How can you find an abductee if there are no independent, objective criteria to use to classify people into that group? Oh, the answer turns out to be easy: Anyone who says they are an abductee, or might be an abductee, or could be an abductee, gets counted as an "abductee." Is this as misguided as it sounds? Basically, yes, with one caveat.

Science is all about, at its most basic level, defining what you are studying rigorously so that you and your colleagues actually know what your research is all about. Social scientists often have a tough time at this because the social world is inherently messy and imprecise, with loose boundaries. Still, you have to try. However, almost all social scientists (and some ufologists) who have studied abductees have not been very precise in their definition of an abductee. This might all seem just nit picking: Get on with it man, isn't it obvious who is and isn't an abductee!

Well, yes it is, if we are talking about someone who remembers floating through their window into a UFO, where they undergo various procedures, are shown hybrid babies, and then taken back to their house. But no it isn't, if we instead are faced with someone who woke up with odd bruises one morning and on that basis thinks that abduction is the likely explanation.

Clancy is interested in the process by which one becomes an abductee, and says, correctly, that for most it comes about slowly, in fits and starts. Even if she believes that both examples above count as abductees, you'd want to separate them into different groups to see how they might differ on a whole variety of traits, and to better be able to study what Clancy might term (not her language) "early" and "late" stage abductees (the former just have weird unexplained experiences; the latter have more vivid memories and are sure they are abductees). In fact, only about 10% of her sample was confident they had been abducted (though even this is left imprecise).

So Clancy's abductee definition lets in just about anyone, and it guarantees that she is going to get a sample with people who are a bit odd (else why would little evidence convince them they might be abductees). But she doesn't come to grips with this obvious influence on her work.

Clancy is not impressed, as some might be, by either those persons who recall their abductions without hypnosis, or by the purported consistency of abduction stories themselves. As for hypnosis, she writes that people can recover memories without it; in fact, she also predicts, "if you're not a believer [in abductions] already (at least to some extent), you're not going to acquire memories of alien abductions." That's a strong statement, and one it would seem has already been disconfirmed by several cases where the witness had no prior belief in UFOs, let alone abductions, yet had an abduction-type experience. But . . . you are playing a fool's game with Clancy here. If such a witness goes to visit an abduction investigator, that would be *prima facie* proof that he had some belief in abductions—else why visit the investigator?

As for abduction consistency, although not quoting Eddie Bullard on this (she pointedly neglects citations to those serious studies appearing in the UFO literature), she first asserts that there is little consistency and that all sorts of details differ from case to case, including the aliens' appearance, what they wear, the type of examination, messages, and so forth. While there is some truth to this, she admits that the general plot is roughly the same, but says that all of this "existed in movies and TV before people ever reported" abductions.

It is with statements like this that Clancy's work begins to leave the rails, as she wanders away from things she has studied to rank speculation about the beliefs and motivations of abductees. Here are two examples:

> Aliens are entirely and extremely human, the imaginative creations of people with ordinary emotional needs and desires. We don't want to be alone. We feel helpless and vulnerable much of the time. We want to believe there's something bigger and better than us out there. And we want to believe that whatever it is cares about us, or at least is paying attention to us. That they want us (sexually or otherwise). That we're special. Being abducted by aliens is a culturally shaped manifestation of a universal human need. . . .
>
> The common features of the alien-abduction stories—the elements of the basic plot—are not evidence of validity. They are evidence that these stories have been contrived out of shared cultural knowledge and shared psychological fears, needs, hopes, and limitations.

I suppose I don't need to tell you that she didn't study

(continued on page 26)

Body Snatchers: An exchange

by Nick Redfern
with a reply by Robert J. Durant

I have just read Robert Durant's review article "Doty and the Body Snatchers," published in the 30:1 issue of *IUR*, whose subject is Greg Bishop's book *Project Beta* and my *Body Snatchers in the Desert* (both published by Paraview, 2005).

Durant begins by sensibly ditching the notion that I initially wrote *Body Snatchers* as a novel and then "decided there was a bigger market in nonfiction Roswell." He suggests instead that I am "the latest victim of the relentless program to disinform ufology." Indeed, I would stress that I do not give a damn about UFO fiction, and I have no interest in writing UFO fiction (there is enough of that in ufology already). The size of a market is of zero concern to me when it comes to determining what I write about or what I don't write about. I write books on UFOs to inform interested parties about information I have uncovered; nothing more, nothing less. People can take it or leave it.

Durant claims that my book created an "uproar" on the UFO Updates site and on other newsgroups. In fact, the alleged uproar was largely limited to a couple of posts per day from Brad Sparks, with various other comments and observations made by Gildas Bourdais, Ed Gerhman, Don Ledger, and Rich Reynolds. Reynolds isn't particularly an advocate of the ideas proposed in *Body Snatchers*, but he is open-minded to aspects of the theory and has privately provided me with reams of data (including a lot of Navy-based data and other material from the 1940s); some of these data relate to "hybrid" balloon-based vehicles similar to those described to me as I researched the book.

Sparks and Bourdais have both argued that the persons I interviewed sught to deceive me with disinformation. However, regular posts from – predominantly – two sources who disagree with the book, coupled with only a limited degree of comment from other subscribers, hardly comprises an "uproar."

Durant goes on to outline the basic premise of the book: that, in a situation mirroring the shameful and Faustian postwar Operation Paperclip, Japanese balloon experts were secretly brought to the United States to continue their research into balloons that were far more advanced than their World War II Fugo devices, and that it was the crash of one such balloon—albeit one designed to carry aloft a flying-wing aircraft—that sparked the legend of the UFO crash at Roswell.

Durant complains that I provided no documentation to support this scenario beyond a single newspaper article. This is absurd. First, if any of the people I had interviewed were able to provide me with Holy Grail–level documentation that utterly confirmed the theory, I would have been highly suspicious of the apparent ease with which they had acquired such seemingly classified material.

Many researchers salivate at the very mention of MJ-12 and the many and assorted documents that have surfaced on the subject. Very few of those same researchers actually give thought to how the ostensible whistleblowers who provided the documents actually got them past security. What were my sources supposed to do: Steal the documents from a vault, then shove them down their trousers and march out the front door? And all just in case they happened to meet someone like me 35 to 50 years later to whom they decided to tell all?

I am underwhelmed by claimants who parade photocopies of "leaked" Top Secret documents that purport to detail extraordinary revelations about crashed UFOs, alien autopsies, and reverse engineering. I am far more intrigued by individuals who relate an account to me and who produce for me their driver's licenses, their credit cards, and tax-related documents (among other papers) that demonstrate they are who they say they are.

And are we also supposed to believe that such documentation would be declassified and surface at an official level? Don't be naïve. Not even the Air Force or the General Accounting Office could find a damned thing of any significance during their excursions into the murky waters of Roswell, and the outgoing records from Roswell from 1946 to 1949 are inexplicably missing. Whatever happened at Roswell, someone carefully and successfully ensured (and

Nick Redfern is a British-born freelance journalist who currently lives in Texas. He has written books on cryptozoology and ufology, the most recent being Body Snatchers in the Desert *(Paraview, 2005). Robert J. Durant is a former airline pilot who has studied UFOs since the 1950s.*

perhaps still does ensure—that's a moot point, however) that the paper trail was stone cold long before half of us were even born.

And before we leave this topic: I have read enough of Durant's work to know that he is a strong advocate of the idea that something truly anomalous occurred in the New Mexico desert in 1947. But if—to use Durant's logic—the story provided to me lacks credibility because the only documentation that I have is a newspaper clipping, he would do well to remember that no official documentation has ever surfaced in support of the idea that anything anomalous crashed at Roswell. If this is a problem, it is a problem for those on both sides of the issue.

On the issue of nuclear-powered aircraft and Roswell, Durant writes, "The insertion of nuclear-power and radiation experiments into the story is puzzling . . . The well-documented efforts to create nuclear propulsion came much later than 1947."

That seems to imply that my sources had said that efforts to create nuclear-powered aircraft were deeply underway in 1947. They did not. Everybody I interviewed told me that there was no nuclear-powered aircraft as such in 1947, but that there *was* a desire to try to determine—with the limited technology that existed at the time—how a crew might be affected by prolonged, nuclear-powered flight, or a reactor, and the like. Bear in mind, too, the crucial consideration that the Nuclear Energy for Propulsion of Aircraft (NEPA) program began in 1946. Here are four quotes from the interviews (my italics):

1. "The thought was to someday build an aircraft that would fly very high and for an extreme amount of time. But how will [the crew] be affected? And if we can really do all this—*and even though it might be years and probably decades ahead*—can we develop a unique type of nuclear aircraft and engine that can fly very high and if necessary stay up there for an extreme period of time?"

2. "[A]lthough the plans were to build nuclear aircraft that would fly very high, *we weren't in a position to build anything like that back then, as this was a long ways ahead, and so they worked with simulations. . . .*"

3. "*There is no nuclear engine back then—none at all.* But there is a need for a simulation of a nuclear flight. . . ."

4. "*That was just too advanced—Buck Rogers—and years away.*"

In other words, none of the interviewees disputed the historical fact that fully functioning nuclear-powered aircraft were a thing of the far future rather than the present of 1947. They were unanimous in the view, however, that rudimentary research had been undertaken and that this involved dubious human experimentation.

Heck, even the *officially declassified* NEPA files of 1948 (only one year after Roswell) talk about NEPA's *ongoing* plans to try to secure permission to use American prisoners in their "tests" in an attempt to make an "accurate prediction" of the "biological changes resulting from known levels of radiation exposure."

I might also point out that Colonel Gasser—"the principal army technician" at the NEPA project at Oak Ridge—is cited in FBI documents of 1949 (included in the book) as having stated that "flying discs have long been a theoretical possibility . . . scientists have for many years, been attempting to develop this type of aircraft. Some experimentation has been done even in the United States, but insofar as is known in the United States, at the present time, there have never been any practical developments. . . ." According to the FBI, Gasser also stated that "there is only one possible fuel which could be utilized which is in accord with present theory, and that is the utilization of atomic energy."

That a source such as Gasser—directly tied to NEPA—should have been aware that the U.S. had actually been attempting to build saucers prior to 1949 is surely intriguing. Moreover, the observation that nothing of a practical nature had been developed from this "experimentation" ties in *exactly* with the testimony provided by my informants—that nearly all of the experiments undertaken had ended in disaster or failure.

Durant also disputes allegations made to me that the work of the Horten brothers of Germany was tied in with the story. But he neglects to mention that not just my interviewees linked UFOs and the Hortens: A USAF document of January 3, 1952, from Brig. Gen. W. M. Garland, to Gen. John A. Samford, Air Force director of intelligence (also in the book), observes, "[I]t is to be noted that certain developments by the Germans, *particularly the Horten wing* [my italics], jet propulsion, and refueling, combined with their extensive employment of V-1 and V-2 weapons during World War II, lend credence to the possibility that the flying objects may be of German and Russian origin."

How curious that none other than the USAF director of intelligence was positing a link between UFOs and particularly the work of the Horten brothers. Was Garland's remark concerning the Russians and Horten vehicles in a UFO context possibly borne out of a knowledge that the Americans had dabbled in something similar a few years previously?

Durant goes on to assert, "The balloon-wing combination fails the common-sense test." So what? No one I interviewed claimed that the operation to launch a huge balloon array with a detachable glider fixed below it as a hybrid-style device *was* straightforward or indeed feasible at all. In fact, if you credit the testimony in the book, then the attempt to launch just such a device was demonstrably *not* feasible and *was* an unmitigated disaster from beginning to end. And we know that because the damned thing crashed on what was possibly the first attempt to fly it. Indeed, the source identified in the book as the "Colonel" said bluntly, "This was just one of many strange projects. Some got canceled—as this one was in late 1947." A comparable "dipshit" comment is made, too, concerning the experimentation.

In other words, my sources concur with Durant that this was not finally seen as a viable area for practical flight; it

was canceled barely months later. And when Durant additionally criticizes the "fundamental feasibility" of the project, those who have not read the book could be forgiven for thinking that my informants were suggesting this was a wonderful project that saw the balloon array lift the aircraft majestically into the air without problem. The Colonel in particular held, however, that the huge, unwieldy mess was a disaster. In fact, none of the informants had anything especially positive to say about the various experiments.

But military planners often come up with bizarre ideas that fail to work. A classic example can be found in formerly classified World War II German documentation, relating how the finest minds in German aviation came up with the bright idea to fly a V-weapon low across the ocean, while it towed an explosives-packed boat in the water. The V-device would then be radio-controlled toward an enemy battleship; it would line up the towboat with the battleship, detach its tow rope, and soar into the skies while the towboat and its cargo of explosives slammed at high speed into the side of the ship, blowing up and sinking ship and crew.

Now, this has nothing to do with Roswell. But it is a classic example in which leading military minds conjure up a bizarre project (and furthermore combine two different devices hybrid-style) that almost certainly—due to logistics—would not have functioned as planned. Indeed, it *was* canceled—due to perceived difficulties. But the important fact is that this didn't prevent the German military from undertaking research before the operation was canceled due to it ultimately not being seen as viable. The same can apply to any nation.

Questioned sources

Durant turns his attention to the sources of the testimony. Referring to one interviewee who worked for the Psychological Strategy Board (Bill Salter), Durant refers to him as "Bill Salter." The use of quotation marks implies that this is a faked name or an alias. It is not. The man's formal name is William Salter.

Commenting on a source in the book who worked at Oak Ridge and whose testimony is presented under the guise of the "Black Widow," Durant contends, "Salter has much to add to the Widow's story." What is particularly odd, however, is that Salter does not add much to the story; hardly anything, in fact. I have no inkling where Durant got the idea that Salter added "much" to the story, but he certainly doesn't get it from my book. *Body Snatchers in the Desert* is 248 pages in length, and Salter's account takes up only half of page 90 and all of page 91. And that's it: one and a half pages out of the book's 248. Salter stressed that he knew nothing firsthand and saw nothing firsthand; all of his information came from a former employee of the Central Intelligence Group and "an old friend from the Department of Energy."

Actually, and somewhat ironically, it is the fact that Salter—by his own admission—knew nothing firsthand and saw nothing firsthand that lends credibility to his account. He was not trying to spin some elaborate tale of disinformation with every avenue carefully covered, and he did not claim to have anything substantial beyond what he was told. This is not the path followed by the experienced disinformation expert who weaves a solid story to divert a person into a carefully controlled environment. But it *is exactly* what we would expect to see and hear from someone who is recalling a specific, personal memory from more than half a century ago and stating something to the effect that "I know nothing personally, but this is what I was told—take it or leave it."

Durant then turns to Al Barker—or as Durant prefers it, "Al Barker." Again, there is nothing obfuscated about his name, beyond the fact that he prefers to be called Al rather than Albert (unless, as I have stated both privately and publicly, someone is going to the extent of creating bogus driving licenses and credit cards for a bunch of old guys in their 80s, with the intent of then having them show this material to me. I will concede, however, that the so-called Falcon did have a faked credit card—under the name Stephen V. Ayres). Durant takes issue with the claim made by Barker that U.S. psychological- warfare planners, in an attempt to hide the truth about Roswell, put out a cover story that Roswell was alien and that alien bodies were recovered. Durant states that "nobody thought Roswell was ET until 1978, and the public didn't hear about that until 1980."

Durant makes one fatal error: His "nobody thought Roswell was ET until 1978" is relevant only to the UFO-research community—as it certainly is the case that Roswell was barely mentioned post-1947 in a UFO context until 1978 (though Frank Edwards does refer to it in his 1966 bestseller *Flying Saucers—Serious Business*). But none of us in UFO research can be 100% sure what the Russians thought about Roswell 50 years ago, nor can we say with certainty what the American response was to the Russians sticking their noses in. Creating faked documents to emphasize the "ET crash" angle would have been an ideal diversionary tactic.

But Durant makes an even bigger and more critical blunder. Remember that he dismissed Barker's claims about cover stories being put out decades ago by the Psychological Strategy Board and Army psychological-warfare planners because "nobody thought Roswell was ET until 1978." But in the interview, Barker did not mention Roswell. What Barker actually said—and was careful to underscore—was that psychological-warfare planners put out bogus crashed UFO stories to hide the collective truth about "the high altitude idiocy at White Sands and elsewhere" (of which the specific "Roswell Incident" was only a part). Barker does *not* specifically refer to cover stories put out about Roswell; he says only that crashed UFO accounts were disseminated to hide a collective series of six or seven experiments undertaken in the desert of New Mexico in the summer of 1947.

Why is this important? Here's why: If Barker had said bogus "crashed UFO" stories were circulated specifically

about Roswell in the 1940s and 1950s, there would indeed be a legitimate reason to question his version of events. But, again, Barker does not do this; he asserts only that faked UFO stories were circulated to hide the "idiocy" of 1947.

And, sure enough, an examination of UFO data demonstrates that a plethora of faked UFO tales *did* begin to enter the public domain from the late 1940s onwards—the most notorious being the tales fed to Frank Scully by Silas Newton and Leo GeBauer. While many dismiss the material provided to Scully as merely the embroidered tales of a pair of con men, as some researchers will be aware (from the research of Karl Pflock), Newton—according to his private journal—was visited by two men who supposedly represented a highly secret government entity that, incredibly, wanted him to keep telling his yarn about a UFO crash at Aztec, New Mexico, in 1948, even though they were aware that it was a spurious tale.

Now, we could dismiss Newton's claim if it stood alone, but it does not. There are other examples where bogus crashed UFO tales were disseminated in broadly the same time frame. Take, for example, the alleged UFO crash on Spitzbergen (owned by Norway) in 1952. The National Security Agency has declassified an English-language translation of a Russian news article (titled *Flying Saucers? They're A Myth!* and written on March 12, 1968, by Villen Lyustiberg, science editor of the Novosti Press Agency) on UFOs. While other American agencies have also made copies of this document available, the NSA's version differs slightly: in the section of the article that deals with Spitzbergen, someone within the official world circled it with the word "Plant." The relevant document can be downloaded in PDF format from the NSA's website.

And moving on further: In 1955, the late journalist Dorothy Kilgallen was allegedly approached by a British government source who claimed knowledge of a crashed UFO. The idea that a senior British government person would reveal such presumably classified material in such a cavalier fashion defies belief. If the tale was bogus, however, and the intent was to disseminate it for other purposes, then things become clearer. Indeed, I have been quietly digging into Kilgallen's activities for a long time now and have learned that U.S. intelligence—in the early to mid-1950s—grew concerned that insider sources were feeding snippets of classified intelligence data to Kilgallen. What better way to smoke out those sources than to feed Kilgallen harmless false anecdotes about crashed UFOs, then monitor her and see whom she asked on the inside for confirmatory data on the crash, and then quietly arrest those same people without any real secrets being compromised?

I also need to stress the official world's definition of psychological warfare (italics mine): "The planned use of propaganda and other psychological actions having the primary purpose of *influencing the opinions*, emotions, attitudes, and behavior of hostile foreign groups in such a way as to support the achievement of national objectives."

It is notable that one of chief recommendations of the lengthy August 1949 Technical Report of the investigative UFO operation Project Grudge was that "*Psychological Warfare Division and other governmental agencies interested in psychological warfare be informed of the results of this study*." The italics are mine. In other words, even before the 1940s were over, the U.S. government had realized that the UFO subject could be used for psychological-warfare reasons—which is what all the sources I interviewed told me had occurred.

Durant questions the credibility of the Colonel's claim that the Roswell events—and, indeed, the other New Mexican events of 1947—were hidden behind a crashed-UFO smokescreen. But again, the Colonel does *not* state that cover stories specifically about Roswell were put out at the time, only that crashed UFO stories were circulated which, again, as I have demonstrated above, did happen, as per Aztec, Spitzbergen, and others.

Enter the S&S lawyers

Noting my remark that the Simon & Schuster legal department insisted on certain name changes, Durant scoffs that this "strains credulity." First, let me note that of the eight books I have written (six in print, two pending), *Body Snatchers* is the only one that necessitated lengthy exchanges with a publisher's legal people on a matter like this.

True, the names of the Colonel and the Black Widow *were* changed; as was the name of the Colonel's superior to "my source," and to "him." This was because—as S&S legal staff know—I spoke with the Colonel's superior who declined to speak on the record to me, even though he knew the Colonel was speaking out; as a result, I was told (not asked, but *told*) by S&S's legal people that the name of the Colonel's boss had to be removed from the manuscript as well.

Similarly, the references in Chapter 8, "The British Connection," to Mr. T and Mr. D are not mine. My original manuscript contained their names. Again, these are further name obfuscations made at a legal level by S&S after deep consultation on certain issues, not all of which were directly related to the UFO angle. I don't care if Durant thinks that this "strains credulity."

Durant insists that my sources should explain why they are not willing to go public. Well, Salter and Barker *have* gone public. They are speaking out under their real names and in a published book that can be purchased all across the United States and the United Kingdom in bookstores and elsewhere on the Internet. As far as I can tell, that equates with speaking out publicly. Durant also asks: Why are they not talking to the *New York Times*? That is their decision. I cannot speak for them, and nor do I know the answer. Did any anti-UFO crash types demand back in 1978, when Maj. Jesse Marcel's identity was obfuscated as "Major J.M.," that to prove his credibility he needed to head at full speed for the offices of the *New York Times*?

Many apparent disinformation operations focused on UFO-crash claims, as Durant notes, first surfaced in the

U.K. He rightly mentions both the MJ-12 documents (which first came to public light in Timothy Good's 1987 British book *Above Top Secret*) and the alien-autopsy film, provided to a British man, Ray Santilli. There is also the seldom-discussed story about how, in late 1986, Jenny Randles was approached by a former British Army source who claimed to have access to voluminous U.S.-originated documentation on crashed UFOs, dead aliens, and the usual litany. But the important point is that all of this (and arguably the approaches made to Robert Emenegger, Linda Moulton Howe, Leonard H. Stringfield, the William L. Moore–Falcon episode) reinforces the ET angle.

Will someone please explain this to me: If at the heart of Roswell and the UFO mystery lies something of extraterrestrial origins and it needs to be so desperately hidden, then why do these alleged insiders such as Randles's source, the suppliers of the alien autopsy film, and the mailers of the MJ-12 documents have such easy access to the material?

Proponents invariably respond that it's a way of "preparing the public for the truth." If that's the case, "they" have been "preparing" the public for decades by telling tall tales to the UFO community, dangling the ET carrot, and then reeling it in. All of this positively reeks of manipulation; and not only that: Such action ensures that the same UFO-research community is under control and is misled into wasting much of its time running down dead-end streets.

Now, why would the government want to provide tantalizing data on such issues to researchers and ensure they endlessly and fruitlessly chase such tales? Could it perhaps be to act as a smokescreen for something far darker and controversial—like medical experimentation undertaken on human beings, somewhat akin to the radiation experiments of the 1940s onwards? And that, if exposed, might also open a Pandora's box on the way in which the UFO subject has been used as a tool of disinformation to hide a whole range of other controversies—perhaps including cattle mutilations? On this latter point, I encourage people to read Colm Kelleher's book *Brain Trust*. You'll never munch on cow burgers again.

Now, people could say that the same thing has happened with me and that I was fed disinformation. As Durant knows, I have *never, ever* dismissed this possibility, and I have said so publicly on UFO Updates and elsewhere. But my main argument against that possibility is this: In the post-Mogul, post-crash-test-dummy era, Roswell was stalemated. There were no new books on the subject; a lot of the mainstream media had bought into Mogul (albeit less so with regard to the dummies—truly the strangest UFO-related report ever to surface from the official world), and many people were focusing on other aspects of ufology.

On top of that, more than 20 individuals, privately or publicly, are talking about their knowledge of the human-experimentation aspect of Roswell.

With all that in mind, if Roswell is a secret (regardless of what lies at its heart) that has to be protected at all costs and continued interest in which is to be discouraged, why would the government stir the pot again by having a group of old folks come forward and unleash the beast of New Mexico on us once again?

Researchers who take issue with the testimony and evidence I presented are trying to follow more ET-suggestive leads. I have no problem with their doing so, of course. We all want to establish the truth about Roswell. My point is this, however: Because the material presented to me is so controversial and so uncongenial to the UFO interpretation, it has had the effect of galvanizing extraterrestrial hypothesizers to dig into the UFO side of Roswell even more firmly. And I come back to my main point: If Roswell was ET and had to be hidden, why put out a story that is going to make people (proponents, skeptics, and agnostics alike) poke into business that—from the perspective of the official world—is none of theirs?

Robert J. Durant responds:

I am pleased to learn from Nick Redfern that "[M]ore than 20 individuals, privately or publicly, are talking about their knowledge of the human-experimentation aspect of Roswell." And presumably we will see their detailed recollections in the journals of the many branches of history which will be shaken by these revolutionary revelations.

Career psychological-warfare (disinformation) operatives William Salter and Albert Barker have achieved celebrity only in the pages of *Body Snatchers*, and seem not yet to have made it to Google, much less the *New York Times*. They and their 20-odd colleagues must be hiding in fear of the heavy hand of the Simon & Schuster legal department. Drat!

If the government used a "crashed spaceship" story to cover the Japanese-Roswell Event, it escaped the American public. A Gallup Poll taken in August 1948 asking about "flying saucers" revealed that the ET explanation for the saucers was believed by so few respondents that it was not even listed. The cover for Roswell was a weather balloon and its radar target, and that remained the cover for either 31 years or 46 years, depending on whether you subscribe to the ET or Mogul interpretation.

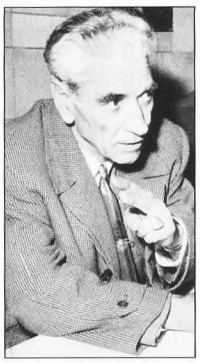
Invoking Norway (!) in 1946 (!) doesn't help, because those "ghost rockets" were commonly believed to be Soviet devices. Like Roswell, the ET hypothesis for the rockets appeared long after, and in ufological circles, not in the contemporary mass media. The Frank Scully hoax came much too late, and was much too lame, to have any impact supporting the Redfern disinformation scenario.

Roswell, whether it was a spacecraft or a Mogul array or a Redfern array, had a public life measured in hours, and remained a non-story until Moore and Berlitz opened the grave 31 years later. The record shows unbroken, relentless efforts by the government to neutralize the idea that flying saucers were a real phenomenon.

In other words, the historical record on this point is exactly opposite to that espoused by Redfern's sources. ✦

SELENITES—*continued from page 18*

on the epic voyage (Little Bucky's dog Big Bo was there, too), had a good meal and met some nice folks, the ship zipped him off to the moon for another excellent meal and a good rest. On the moon Nelson saw a "building." Some lunar "children played with several sized dogs. They rode Big Bo like a pony." Then Bucky and band were off to Venus.



George Adamski

While aboard a mothership from Saturn on April 22, 1953, contactee and space traveler George Adamski (who had first come to public attention with photographs, allegedly taken through his telescope, of flying saucers near the moon) conversed with the pilot, an individual named Zuhl. In his *Inside the Space Ships* (1955) Adamski does not mention tape-recording the exchange, but perhaps he had a spectacular memory; at any rate, he quotes the Saturnian's words about the moon:

> The side of the Moon which you can see from your planet is quite comparable to your desert areas on Earth. It is hot, as your scientists correctly claim, but its temperature is not so extreme as they think. And while the side which you do not see is colder, neither is it as cold as they believe. It is strange how people of Earth accept statements from those they look up to as men of learning without questioning the limitations of that knowledge.
>
> There is a beautiful strip or section around the center of the Moon in which vegetation, trees and animals thrive, and in which people live in comfort. Even you of Earth could live on that part of the Moon....
>
> Many of your scientists have expressed the idea that the Moon is a dead body. If this were true ... it long ago would have vanished from space through disintegration. No! It is very much alive and supports a life which includes people. We ourselves have a large laboratory just beyond the rim of the Moon, out of sight of Earth, in the temperate and cooler section of that body.

Shortly thereafter, Adamski got a look for himself through a viewing instrument aboard the craft. He spotted a small growth of vegetation and, more dramatically, a small animal. "It was four-legged and furry," he wrote, "but its speed prevented me from identifying it." Adamski does not explain how he would have been able to "identify" a moon animal.

THE CONTACTEES' MOON

On a website devoted to contactee lore, longtime English saucerian Jimmy Goddard summarizes the moon as envisioned in the claims of space communicants:

> The Moon has a substantial atmosphere—6 pounds per square inch in its lowest elevations. . . . [It] has a much higher gravity than has been theorized—a value greater than 50% of Earth's. . . . [It] has water and known vegetation. . . . There are large variations in environment, between the side that always faces the Earth, and the far side that only can be seen from lunar orbit. (*This is only because the Moon is not a true sphere but is bulged on the side facing Earth, causing this side to be in effect higher altitude land. While, as Adamski admitted, this is a hostile desert area for the most part, people can live there if they undergo suitable decompression)* [italics in original]. . . . The Moon is occupied by space people. There are artificial bases on the front side, and more natural bases on the far side. The evidence has been photographed and verified.

In an October 10, 1952, automatic-writing communication to a contactee group in Prescott, Arizona, two Uranus residents reported that besides the known earth moon, there is a "dark moon" which the "magnetic field" renders invisible to terrestrial observers. Moreover, "your first Moon is not as far away as you think. . . . [It] has an atmosphere and water. . . . There are even inhabitants on the Moon! We have many bases of interplanetary nature there, too."

Sadly, not so. As Giovanni Riccioli knew as long ago as the 17th century, the moon is dead. So, too, are the dreams humans dreamed as they rambled the lunar landscapes of what turned out to be no more than their imaginations. This line from an old English lyric folk song (which Lord Byron later incorporated into a famous poem) says it all:

We'll go no more a-roving
By the light of the moon. ✦

ANSWERS TO JUST FOR FUN

All statements are about George Hunt Williamson! A true renaissance man of oddball and offbeat behavior.

ABDUCTED—*continued from page 20*

our "fears" or "needs" or "hopes," at least not in any objective sense, as to how they relate to abductions.

She goes on in this vein for several pages, suggesting at several points that abduction stories are a type of substitute for religion and religious beliefs as they provide meaning for the abductees' lives. Well, if you are going to go for it, you might as well not hold back.

One finishes this book with the thought that although only a little has been learned about abductees and their beliefs, quite a lot has been revealed about what some academics believe about abductees. ✦

Letter

Planet of the cogs

To the editor:

Like my respected friend Michael Swords ("As Great an Enigma as the UFOs Themselves," *IUR* 30:1), I've also been pondering—though with respect to a quite different topic—why facts are ignored when their implications are unwanted. Here are some possible explanations.

People ignore facts when their implications are unwished. That's a fact.

Mike, you and I are very unrepresentative of the wider society. People who take UFOs seriously (or Nessies, or psychic phenomena) and who actually want to get to the truth about them are very unrepresentative of the wider society. Most kids seem to lose their curiosity soon after adolescence. Most people want to fit in.

It's easy for us to forget that when we've spent our lives doing science and teaching science and interacting with young people who are seemingly—and unusually!—interested in finding out how the world works.

It's easy to assume that everyone else is also curious and believes that facts should be placed before wishes and prejudices. But that's not the fact of the matter. Least of all is this true when the people involved are bureaucrats. No doubt one finds within bureaucracies the occasional maverick, such as David Graham in the FDA, who naively imagines that the bureaucracies are populated by cogs, not by independently minded people. Every cog does its job, and no cog has the job of making waves, of coming up with something unprecedented. I think that's all the more so in military bureaucracies, even given that a few generals exert some individual initiative once they are safely high enough in the hierarchy.

Every conceivable explanation for actual UFOs is in some way disturbing. None seems to offer any ready path to making money. So, in whose interest is it, to insist that there's a mystery that needs to be looked into? It won't lead to a salary raise or a promotion, and it won't lead to a research grant. You can only make trouble for yourself, and people who populate bureaucracies tend to be people who try to avoid making trouble for themselves. So, they do what they can to ignore unpleasant facts.

Henry Bauer
Blacksburg, Virginia

Michael Swords replies:

Alas, I'm afraid it must be so.

Of all my scholarly friends, I have found Henry Bauer to be the one most uniformly sensible and enlightening. But still, as Henry says, a life spent teaching imbues one with the naïve hope that people will actually care about truths, and integrate them into new syntheses that enrich their lives. I believe, from my old history of science days, that there have been eras much more likely than others to accept expansions of the paradigm, and even "tolerance of wild possibilities," than others. Such eras are characterized by a mysterious (romantic even) attitude that pervades science, but also the arts, music, literature, and even social thought as well. Some say such periods ended when the world went very fast and global, and we will never see them again. Both creative productive leaps *and* arrogant nonsense abound in such eras, but the value of the creative box-bursting always outweighed the unsupportable garbage. And . . . at least things were fun. Whatever the "Truth," we certainly don't live in such an age now. So, I am reduced to being "abnormal" and, you know, sometimes that's not too bad. ✦

EUROPEAN UFOLOGY ORGANIZES

During the weekend of October 14–15, 2005, I was invited to deliver a speech at the First Encounters of European Ufologists conference in Châlons-en-Champagne, France. At the same time, I attended a closed-door EuroUFO meeting that had been set up for the occasion. EuroUFO is a network of some 50 researchers launched in 1998 by Edoardo Russo.

Twenty-three investigators from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Switzerland participated in the colloquium meetings during the two days, and a resolution was drafted by a few of us and released to the press.

At the European level, we found there is a need to improve and reinforce cooperation among organizations and individuals who approach ufology from a rational perspective. By building an inventory of ongoing research projects we will keep track of *who is doing what.*

We must survey and safeguard the existing archives and resources of UFO researchers to find out *who has what* and preserve endangered collections.

We must provide encouragement and assistance to any scientific research on anomalous aerospace phenomena that can be carried out by universities or the government.

We must explore research models that allow a merging of national or topical catalogs of UFO reports currently in existence.

We must expand the current network to incorporate a larger database and create an Internet portal for showing and sharing information on UFO projects and results.

Basically, the new EuroUfoNet is a virtual space that offers opportunities for discussion, data exchange, and information. With no ideological restriction other than the practice of scientific ufology, members can have differing approaches and beliefs. With the minimum requirement a willingness to share data and cooperate, we expect that the resulting broader network of UFO students will produce a critical mass needed to push certain common projects.

For European UFO researchers and groups there will be true advantages to belong to EuroUfoNet, both now and in the future. We believe this is a first big step in the right direction.—*Vicente-Juan Ballester Olmos.* ✦

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